

# PARAMETERS

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Stephen E. Ambrose—Eisenhower's Generalship

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# Eisenhower's Generalship

STEPHEN E. AMBROSE

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The centennial year of the birth of Dwight David Eisenhower (born 14 October 1890) provides an opportune occasion to review and assess his leadership and generalship. Ike came to command late in life. Although he graduated from West Point in 1915, until 1942 he had held only one command, and that a stateside training post for less than a year in 1918. Until December 1942, when he paid a visit to the front lines in Tunisia as Commander of the Allied Force Headquarters, he had never heard a shot fired in anger.

Yet on 8 November 1942, Eisenhower commanded the first Allied offensive of the war—Operation Torch. It was an extraordinarily complex operation. His forces, British and American, land, sea, and air, were attacking at three widely separated points—Casablanca, Algiers, and Oran—against a neutral force, the French colonial army, without a declaration of war. The Casablanca striking force, led by George S. Patton, Jr., combat-loaded in Virginia and sailed across the Atlantic to make its landing. The American and British forces that loaded in Great Britain for the attacks on Algiers and Oran had to sail through the Straits of Gibraltar. What the French would do, no one knew. Eisenhower hoped to persuade them, through diplomacy rather than force of arms, to join the Allied cause rather than resist.

In short, Eisenhower, in his first experience in either combat or command, faced problems that were serious in the extreme and as much political as military. His staff was at least as tense as he was and looked to him for leadership. But leadership was a subject he had studied for decades. It was not an art in his view, but a skill to be learned. "The one quality that can be developed by studious reflection and practice is the leadership of men," he had written to his son John at West Point.<sup>1</sup> Here was his chance to show that he had developed it.



In the event, Eisenhower not only exercised leadership, but learned new lessons. It was "during those anxious hours" in Gibraltar, he later wrote in a draft introduction to his memoirs that he finally decided to discard, "that I first realized how inexorably and inescapably strain and tension wear away at the leader's endurance, his judgment, and his confidence. The pressure becomes more acute because of the duty of a staff constantly to present to the commander the worst side of an eventuality." In this situation, Eisenhower realized, the commander had to "preserve optimism in himself and in his command. Without confidence, enthusiasm, and optimism in the command, victory is scarcely obtainable."

Eisenhower also realized that "optimism and pessimism are infectious and they spread more rapidly from the head downward than in any other direction." He saw two additional advantages to a cheerful and hopeful attitude by the commander: First, the "habit tends to minimize potentialities within the individual himself to become demoralized." Second, it

has a most extraordinary effect upon all with whom he comes in contact. With this clear realization, I firmly determined that my mannerisms and speech in public would always reflect the cheerful certainty of victory—that any pessimism and discouragement I might ever feel would be reserved for my pillow. I adopted a policy of circulating through the whole force to the full limit imposed by physical considerations. I did my best to meet everyone from general to private with a smile; a pat on the back, and a definite interest in his problems.<sup>2</sup>

Eisenhower initially seemed to be a better diplomat than soldier. The deal he struck with Admiral Jean Darlan, Commander-in-Chief of the French armed forces in Africa, quickly brought French resistance to an end. Although the agreement was subject to harsh criticism, especially from liberals in the United States and the United Kingdom because of Darlan's fascist politics, it freed Ike's forces to strike east against the Germans in Tunisia. But Eisenhower's decisiveness and willingness to take risks on the political front contrasted sharply with his indecisiveness and caution on the military front. He failed to galvanize his troops; the Germans solidified their hold on Tunisia; a stalemated campaign resulted. In February, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel counterattacked at Kasserine

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Pass; the American forces there were ill-served by their seniors and suffered a humiliating defeat. Eisenhower later recognized that the fault was his because he had not been ruthless enough in dismissing incompetent commanders, especially II Corps Commander Lloyd Fredendall.

Ike learned from his mistakes, however. Kasserine, he told Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, was a blessing in disguise, because American troops had profited from the experience. The men, he reported, "are now mad and ready to fight. All our people, from the very highest to the very lowest, have learned that this is not a child's game and are ready and eager to get down to business."<sup>3</sup> He brought Patton over from Casablanca to take command in Tunisia, and told Patton (in advice that might better have been self-directed), "You must not retain for one instant any man in a responsible position where you have become doubtful of his ability to do the job. This matter frequently calls for more courage than any other thing you will have to do, but I expect you to be perfectly cold-blooded about it."<sup>4</sup> To an old friend, Leonard Gerow, then training an infantry division in Scotland, Ike expanded on the theme. "Officers that fail," he wrote, "must be ruthlessly weeded out. Considerations of friendship, family, kindness, and nice personality have nothing whatsoever to do with the problem. You must be tough." He told Gerow to get rid of the "lazy, the slothful, the indifferent, or the complacent," even if he had to spend the rest of his life writing letters explaining his actions.<sup>5</sup>

In short, North Africa hardened Eisenhower. But he still had much to learn. After the victory in North Africa, he launched the invasion of Sicily (July 1943). The decision to go into Sicily showed the strategic caution of the Allies, and of Eisenhower—Sicily was defended by Italian troops of dubious quality and only two German divisions. It was a long way from Rome, much less the heart of Germany. He allowed Bernard L. Montgomery, commanding the British forces, and Patton to conduct risk-free campaigns that moved at a slow pace and failed to bag many German prisoners. In September, he launched his third amphibious attack, on the Italian mainland at Salerno, once again a cautious strategic decision as Salerno was well south of Rome. He called off at the last minute an airborne operation designed to capture Rome, judging the risk to be too high. The result was another stalemate; not until nine months later would Allied troops finally get to Rome.

The year 1943 had been marked by great gains on the map. The forces under Eisenhower's command had conquered Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Sicily, and southern Italy. The strategic gains, however, had been small at best. Germany had not lost any territory critical to her defense. She had not been forced to reduce her forces in France or in Russia. Taken as a whole, Eisenhower's campaigns from November 1942 to December 1943 must be judged a strategic failure.

By no means was that altogether his fault. In the summer of 1942 he had warned his political bosses about what was going to happen if they turned

**A cheerful Ike aboard a jeep for a tour of the front,  
16 November 1944.  
"Without confidence,  
enthusiasm, and optimism  
in the command, victory is  
scarcely obtainable."**



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down Operation Roundup, a proposed invasion of France, in favor of Torch, the invasion of North Africa. Still, some of the blame did fall to Eisenhower. The excessive caution with which he opened the campaign, his refusal to run risks to get to Tunis before the Germans, his refusal to take a chance and rush troops into Sardinia, his refusal to relieve Fredendall, his refusal to take a grip on the battle in Sicily, his refusal to seize the opportunity to take Rome with the 82d Airborne—all contributed to the unhappy situation he left behind in Italy. The Allied armies were well south of Rome as winter set in, with little hope of any rapid advance. They had spent great resources for small gain.

On the political side, the legacy of the campaign was one of profound mistrust of the Americans and the British by the French and the Russians, each of whom wanted a second front in northwest France, and each of whom was deeply suspicious of the Darlan deal. In sum, the campaign brought minimal military rewards at the cost of diplomatic disaster.

Yet there was at least one clear gain from 1943 for the Allies—the year had given the high command in general, and Eisenhower particularly, along with his troops, badly needed experience. Further, Eisenhower had learned which of his subordinates could stand up to the strain of battle, and which could not. Had it not been for Torch, had Roundup been launched in 1943 instead of Overlord in 1944, the Allies would have gone ashore with an

insecure Eisenhower in command of inexperienced troops led by Lloyd Fredendall. The idea of Fredendall in charge at Omaha Beach is by itself enough to justify the Mediterranean campaign.

In his first combat experience, Eisenhower had been unsure of himself, hesitant, often depressed, irritable, liable to make snap judgments on insufficient information, defensive in both his mood and his tactics. But he had learned how critical it was for him to be always cheery and optimistic in the presence of his subordinates, how costly caution can be in combat, and whom he could rely upon in critical moments.

In the Mediterranean campaign, Eisenhower and his team had improved dramatically. As they prepared for the climax of the war, the invasion of France, they were vastly superior to the team that had invaded North Africa in November 1942. In that respect, the payoff for Torch was worth the price.

Eisenhower's role in the invasion of France is so well known that it needs only the briefest reference here. Indeed, it is so well known that it can be said that his place in history was fixed as night fell on the Normandy beaches on 6 June 1944. Hundreds of thousands, indeed millions, of men and women contributed to the success of Operation Overlord, and 200,000 soldiers, sailors, and airmen participated directly on D-Day itself, but the operation will forever be linked to one name, Dwight Eisenhower. From inception to completion, it bore his personal stamp. He was the central figure in the preparation, the planning, the training, the deception, the organization, and the execution of the greatest invasion in history. At the decisive moment he was the commanding general who ordered the American airborne to carry out the planned mission, despite last-minute predictions from his Air Commander, Trafford Leigh-Mallory, that the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions would suffer 70 percent casualties and be incapable of carrying out their assigned tasks. Eisenhower was the general who, standing alone, weighed all the factors in light of the adverse weather, considered all the alternatives, listened to the views of his senior subordinates (split right down the middle), and made the decision he was born to make.

In the campaign that followed D-Day, Eisenhower's biggest problem sometimes seemed to be more British Field Marshal Montgomery, less the Germans. Monty's hesitancy before Caen, through June and most of July 1944, infuriated Ike's staff and the American generals in the field. Monty's failure to close the gap at the Falaise pocket in August all but drove Patton to turn on the British and, as he said, "drive them into the sea for another Dunkirk." Patton and his immediate superior, General Omar Bradley, blamed Ike as much as Monty, because in their view Ike should have either fired Montgomery or forced him to attack.

Their anger grew that fall, when Monty failed to take the port of Antwerp and failed to marshal his forces to get to Arnhem. Montgomery then made the situation worse by demanding that he be made single ground

commander (meaning that he be put in charge of the American operations as Bradley's superior) and that the British 21st Army Group be given all incoming supplies for a single thrust to Berlin. Patton meanwhile demanded that Ike stop Monty where he was, give US Third Army all the supplies, and let Third Army launch a single thrust south of the Ardennes to Berlin.

Eisenhower insisted on advancing both south and north of the Ardennes, with the British and Americans more or less abreast—the so-called broad-front strategy. Bradley, Montgomery, and Patton were all furious. Each general charged that Ike was a compromiser, a commander who was afraid to make the tough decision. Each charged that Ike always seemed to agree with the last man he talked to, to accept his plan, only to reverse himself when he talked to the next guy.

It was a most serious charge, and a bit off the mark. Montgomery tended to hear what he wanted to hear, read what he wanted to read; Eisenhower tended to seek out words and phrases that would appease. There was, consequently, a consistent misunderstanding between the two men. Nevertheless, Eisenhower never yielded on the two main points, command and single thrust—not in August and September 1944, nor again when they were raised in January and March 1945. He took and kept control of the land battle just as he said he would. And he never wavered, from the moment he first saw the SHAEF plans for a two-front advance into Germany to the last month of the war, on the question of the so-called broad front.

Ike did waver, sometimes badly, on some important issues—primarily the relative importance of Arnhem and Antwerp, and the meaning of the word priority. But he never told Montgomery anything that a reasonable man could have construed as a promise that Patton would be stopped in Paris and 21st Army Group be sent on to Berlin. Nor did he ever encourage Patton to believe that he would be sent to Berlin alone. He always insisted on invading Germany from both north and south of the Ardennes.

His reasons were manifold. His analysis of German morale and geography played a large role. Even after the Allies got through the West Wall, a significant barrier would remain between them and the German heartland, the Rhine River. A single thrust, especially beyond the Rhine, would be subject to counterattacks on the flanks. Eisenhower believed that the counterattacks might be powerful enough to sever the supply lines and then destroy the leading armies. With the Allies' limited port capacity, they could not bring forward adequate supplies to sustain an army beyond the Rhine. Every mile that the advancing troops moved away from the Normandy ports added to the problems. For example, forward airfields had to be constructed to provide fighter support for the troops. But to construct them it was necessary to move engineers and building materials forward, at the expense of weapons and gasoline. One senior engineer involved pointed out that if Patton had gone

across the Rhine in September he would have done so without any logistical or air support at all. "A good task force of *Panzerfaust*, manned by Hitler Youth, could have finished them off before they reached Kassel."<sup>6</sup> As for Monty's 21st Army Group, his own chief of staff Freddie de Guingand pointed out that when (and if) it reached the Rhine, bridging material would have to be brought forward at the expense of other supplies. Like Eisenhower, de Guingand doubted that there would be a collapse of German morale; he expected the enemy to fight to the bitter end.

As, of course, the Germans did; it took the combined efforts of 160 Russian divisions *and* the entire AEF *and* an Italian offensive *and* eight additional months of devastating air attack to force a German capitulation. After the war, de Guingand remarked, a bit dryly, that he had to doubt that Montgomery could have brought about the same result with 21st Army Group alone. "My conclusion, is, therefore," de Guingand wrote, "that Eisenhower was right."<sup>7</sup>

The personality and political factors in Eisenhower's decision are obvious. Patton pulling one way, Montgomery the other—each man insistent, each certain of his own military genius, each accustomed to having his own way. Behind them were adulating publics, who had made Patton and Montgomery into symbols of their respective nation's military prowess. In Eisenhower's view, to give one or the other the glory would have serious repercussions, not just in the howls of agony from the press and public of the nation left behind, but in the very fabric of the Alliance itself. Eisenhower feared it could not survive the resulting uproar. It was too big a chance to take, especially on such a risky operation. Eisenhower never considered taking it.

Montgomery and Patton showed no appreciation of the pressures on Eisenhower when they argued so persistently for their plans, but then Eisenhower's worries were not their responsibility. Montgomery wanted a quick end to the war, he wanted the British to bring it about, and he wanted to lead the charge into Berlin personally. Patton would have given anything to beat him to it. Had Eisenhower been in their positions, he almost surely would have felt as they did, and he wanted his subordinates to be aggressive and to believe in themselves and their troops.

Eisenhower's great weakness in this situation was not that he wavered on the broad-front question, but that he was too eager to be well liked and too interested in keeping everyone happy. Because of these characteristics, he would not end a meeting until at least verbal agreement had been found. Thus he did appear to be always shifting, "inclining first one way, then the other," according to the views and wishes of the last man with whom he had talked. Eisenhower, as British Field Marshal Alan Brooke put it, seemed to be "an arbiter balancing the requirements of competing allies and subordinates rather than a master of the field making a decisive choice."<sup>8</sup> Everyone who talked to him left the meeting feeling that Eisenhower had agreed with

him, only to find out later that he had not. Thus Montgomery, Bradley, and Patton filled their diaries and letters and conversations with denunciations of Eisenhower (Bradley less so than the others).

The real price that had to be paid for Eisenhower's desire to be well liked was not, however, animosity toward him from Montgomery and Patton. It came, rather, on the battlefield. In his attempts to appease Montgomery and Patton, Eisenhower gave them great tactical leeway, to the point of allowing them to choose their own objectives. The result was one of the great mistakes of the war, the failure to take and open Antwerp promptly, which represented the only real chance the Allies had to end the war in 1944. The man both immediately and ultimately responsible for that failure was Eisenhower.

**T**hrough November and on into December of 1944, Ike's armies kept pounding at the Germans, all across the front that now stretched from the Swiss border to the North Sea. On 16 December the Germans launched a completely unexpected and astonishingly strong counteroffensive in the Ardennes. The Germans managed to achieve an eight-to-one advantage in infantrymen and a four-to-one advantage in tanks. The ensuing Battle of the Bulge was by far the largest ever fought by the US Army, and the costliest, with more than 40,000 casualties in one month.

Eisenhower accepted the blame for the surprise, and he was right to do so, as he had failed to read correctly the mind of the enemy. He failed to see that Hitler would take desperate chances, and Eisenhower was the man responsible for the weakness of the American line in the Ardennes because he was the one who had insisted on maintaining a general offensive.

But despite his mistakes, Ike was the first to grasp the full import of the offensive (Bradley had dismissed it as a spoiling attack; Eisenhower insisted that it was a genuine counteroffensive). Ike was the first to be able to readjust his thinking and the first to realize that—although the surprise and the initial Allied losses were painful—in fact Hitler had given the Allies a great opportunity by bringing his armies out from the shelter of the West Wall. On the morning of 17 December, only hours after the German attack began, Ike wrote the War Department, "If things go well we should not only stop the thrust but should be able to profit from it." It was Ike who decided that Bastogne was the critical point, and who insisted on holding the Belgian town. It was Ike who, very much against Patton's initial wishes, ordered the Third Army to break off its offensive to the east and attack to the north, to relieve the encircled 101st Airborne in Bastogne. It was Ike who decided to put in motion a counterattack designed to destroy the German panzer armies in the Ardennes, not just hold them. In all these decisions, the event proved him right.

In January and February 1945, Ike insisted on attacking all along the line. He wanted to destroy as much of the German army as he could west of

the Rhine River. Monty again—and Patton, too—urged that the other guy be stopped where he was, to allow a single thrust. Eisenhower refused. He rightly believed that killing Germans west of the Rhine was a whole lot easier than killing them east of the Rhine was going to be, and so long as Hitler was willing to fight west of the Rhine, Ike was going to take advantage of his opportunity.

In March, the Allies got a great break when they captured intact the Ludendorf Bridge at Remagen. The plan had called for crossing the Rhine north and south of Remagen, but Ike instantly decided to make a major crossing in the center, with US First Army. He was able to do so because his armies had closed to the Rhine all along its length, which gave him great flexibility. It proved to be the correct decision—American troops poured over the bridge and quickly encircled the German armies to the north. Within weeks, Allied forces were overrunning Germany.

On 7 May 1945 at SHAEF headquarters in Reims, France, the Germans signed the unconditional surrender. After the signing, which took place at 2:30 a.m., Eisenhower opened a bottle of champagne to celebrate. It was flat. So was Ike, who was dead tired. Instead of celebrating, he went to bed.

**E**isenhower's lack of fizz in those wee hours notwithstanding, it is proper that we raise our glasses now to what he had accomplished and what he had cause to celebrate. The problem is that one searches in vain for fitting accolades to acknowledge the accomplishments of Dwight D. Eisenhower in the Second World War. How does one satisfactorily remark on what he endured, on what he contributed to the final victory, on his place in military history?

Fortunately George C. Marshall, next to Eisenhower himself the man most responsible for Ike's success, spoke for the nation and its allies, as well as the US Army, when he replied to Eisenhower's last wartime message. "You have completed your mission with the greatest victory in the history of warfare," Marshall began. "You have commanded with outstanding success the most powerful military force that had ever been assembled. You have met and successfully disposed of every conceivable difficulty incident to varied national interests and international political problems of unprecedented complications." Eisenhower, Marshall said, had triumphed over inconceivable logistical problems and military obstacles. "Through all of this, since the day of your arrival in England three years ago, you have been selfless in your actions, always sound and tolerant in your judgments, and altogether admirable in the courage and wisdom of your military decisions.

"You have made history, great history for the good of mankind, and you have stood for all we hope for and admire in an officer of the United States Army. These are my tributes and my personal thanks."<sup>10</sup> It was the highest possible praise from the best possible source. It had been earned.



Eisenhower had earned the praise through a total commitment of his time, energy, and emotion, of course, but even more through his brains, talents, and leadership. He had also been lucky—in his assignments, in his aides and subordinates and superiors, in his opponents, in the weather on D-Day. He had received so many good breaks, in fact, that “Eisenhower luck” became a byword. But much more than luck was involved in his success.

One leadership attribute was his attention to detail, complemented by his intuitive knowledge of *which* detail to pay attention to. His decision on the weather on D-Day, for example, was not just pure dumb luck. For a month before the sixth of June, he had made time in his overcrowded schedule to spend 15 minutes every day with his weatherman, Group Captain Stagg. He would hear Stagg’s prediction for the next couple of days, then query him on the basis of the judgment. He wanted to know how good Stagg was, so he would be able to make his own evaluation when the time came.

As a soldier, Eisenhower’s chief characteristic was his flexibility. He often said that in preparing for battle, plans were essential, but that once the battle was joined, plans were useless. Nowhere did this characteristic show more clearly or effectively than in his response to the capture of the bridge at Remagen.

Eisenhower was outstanding at the art of mentally leaping over the front lines to get into the mind of the enemy. He alone understood, in



General Eisenhower speaks to men of the 29th Infantry Division at the front in Europe, 10 November 1944. He “adopted a policy of circulating through the whole force to the full limit,” determined to “reflect the cheerful certainty of victory.”

September 1944, that the Germans would fight furiously until they had no bullets left, just as he understood on 17 December that the Germans were launching a counteroffensive in the Ardennes, not just a counterattack.

In the Mediterranean, he had been excessively cautious in his generalship, but in the campaign in northwest Europe, he showed boldness and a willingness to take risks. The best example was his decision to go ahead with the D-Day drops of the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions in the face of Air Commander Trafford Leigh-Mallory's strongly worded recommendation that they be called off. In view of the indispensable contributions of the paratroopers to the success of D-Day, for that decision alone Eisenhower earned his fame.

Ike made mistakes in Europe, although fewer than he had in the Mediterranean. Some came about because of greater goals, for example, maintaining a united front with America's British allies. Appeasing Montgomery meant the failure to take Caen in mid-June 1944; it meant failure to totally destroy the German army at Falaise in mid-August; it meant failure to take Antwerp in mid-September. It also cost the Allies dearly in early January 1945, when Monty failed to bag the Germans in the Bulge. That led to the heaviest losses of the war for the American Army.

To Eisenhower's critics, his biggest mistake was his failure to take Berlin (this author would hotly dispute that judgment). On an even larger scale, he was certainly wrong in 1945 to have such faith (or hope) in the future of US-Soviet relations. He should have recognized that the issues that divided the reluctant allies were too great to be overcome.

But as a strategist, the highest art of a commander, he was far more often right than wrong. He was right in his selection of Normandy as the invasion site, right in his selection of Bradley rather than Patton as First Army commander, right in his insistence on using bombers against the French railway system, right to insist on a broad-front approach to Germany, right to see the Bulge as opportunity rather than disaster, right to fight the major battle west of the Rhine. Eisenhower was right on the big decisions.

He was the most successful general of the greatest war ever fought.

#### NOTES

1. Dwight Eisenhower to John Eisenhower, 19 June 1943, Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas.
2. The draft manuscript of *Crusade in Europe* is in the Eisenhower Library.
3. Quoted in Martin Blumenson, *Kasserine Pass* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), pp. 297, 306.
4. Eisenhower to Patton, 6 March 1943, Eisenhower Library.
5. Eisenhower to Gerow, 24 February 1943, Eisenhower Library.
6. Quoted in Forrest Pogue, *The Supreme Command* (Washington, US Dept. of the Army, 1954), p. 259.
7. Sir Francis de Guingand, *Operation Victory* (New York: Scribner's, 1947), pp. 329-30.
8. Sir Arthur Bryant, *Triumph in the West* (London: Collins, 1959), p. 213.
9. Eisenhower to Marshall, 17 December 1944, Eisenhower Library.
10. Marshall to Eisenhower, 7 May 1945, Eisenhower Library.

# John Lehman's *Command*

JOHN J. MEARSHEIMER

A Review Essay on *Command of the Seas*. By John F. Lehman. 464 pages. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988.

John Lehman, Secretary of the Navy during the bulk of the Reagan era, was the most controversial and probably the most effective service secretary in modern times. He had great success at securing resources for the Navy and protecting its interests in the Pentagon battles of the 1980s. Many Army and Air Force officers surely regretted that he was not their service secretary.

*Command of the Seas* is Lehman's account of his exploits at the helm of the Navy from 1981 to 1987. It is an entertaining read which covers a variety of topics, including the Maritime Strategy, the 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, the Falklands War, the 1986 bombing of Libya, the 1983 invasion of Grenada, and the Navy's myriad procurement problems. Lehman's view of these matters has changed little since he left office, and thus the book's basic line of argument is a familiar one. It goes like this. The security problems facing the Navy, not to mention the country, are obvious and not very complicated; so are the solutions. The Secretary, of course, has figured out those solutions, although on almost every issue key individuals disagree with him. Those who challenge Lehman are clearly portrayed as the bad guys and he castigates them at every turn, while those who share his views and help promote his career are the good guys.

Not surprisingly, *Command of the Seas*, much like Nancy Reagan's recent memoir, aims to get even with former bureaucratic foes. And Lehman had no shortage of adversaries. Consider his description of his last days in office: "So instead of a stately departure, I felt like the retiring marshal of the Old West, backing out of the saloon with guns blazing because every punk wants to take a shot at him on the way out." By that point, the biggest "punk"

on the block was the Chief of Naval Operations himself, Admiral Carlisle Trost. Lehman skewers him along with his many other enemies.

The book's most interesting chapter details the firing of Admiral Hyman Rickover, who had long headed up the Navy's nuclear propulsion program. Lehman surely recognized that Rickover, a crotchety old mogul, was the one bureaucrat who could thwart his plan to take full control of the Navy. However, the Admiral's age, his loss of important congressional allies, and Lehman's formidable bureaucratic skills provided the basis for forcing Rickover out of office. Nevertheless, Rickover went not with a whimper but a bang in a famous White House meeting where President Reagan tried to smooth the Admiral's ruffled feathers. When Rickover asked why he was being fired, the President began to explain that he really was not firing Rickover. Before the President had completed one sentence, Rickover blurted out, "Aw, cut the crap." At another point, a furious Rickover queried the President: "Are you a man? Can't you make decisions yourself?" Finally, he told the President that Lehman was a "piss-ant [who] knows nothing about the Navy." One can imagine how dumbfounded the President and his aides were by this outburst. And one can hope that Reagan was following that rich tradition of taping Oval Office conversations. More to the point, one realizes that in an earlier time, when Rickover was plowing through the waters with a full head of steam, he would have clashed continuously with Lehman, and the Secretary probably would not have won many of those battles. Rickover was now gone, however, and there was no other serious challenger to Lehman's position within the Navy hierarchy.

**A**mong the most important chapters are those dealing with the famous Maritime Strategy, supposedly the blueprint for procuring a 600-ship Navy. This force, which was to be built around 15 carrier battle groups, was destined to cost an astronomical amount of money, money that would have to come out of other Navy accounts and other service budgets. It thus had enormous implications for the specific contours of the nation's military strategy since funds spent on carrier battle groups would not be available to support other systems and strategic designs. There was abundant opposition to the 600-ship Navy and the Maritime Strategy from the start, and almost all

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Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

**President Reagan greets Secretary Lehman and Admiral Rickover at their explosive meeting on 8 January 1982 to discuss Rickover's retirement.**

of it was justified. Procuring expensive aircraft carriers to threaten a continental power like the Soviet Union made little sense: the strike aircraft from the carriers would possess little punch against the formidable land-based defenses of the Soviets. Buying carriers to threaten the Soviet Union was tantamount to buying pellet guns to shoot rampaging elephants. Not surprisingly, an army of strategic analysts, both inside and outside the Pentagon, opposed the 600-ship Navy. Yet they failed to sink it during Lehman's tenure.

How did he succeed? Clues to this intriguing question are provided in *Command of the Seas*, although the book is anything but an objective treatment of the matter. It is apparent that there was no good strategic rationale for the 600-ship Navy and thus military logic did not carry the day. The Maritime Strategy was riddled with flaws and Lehman himself spends surprisingly little time justifying the naval buildup in terms of the Soviet threat. In fact, what is remarkable about the book is how small a role the Soviets played in the Secretary's thinking. The real enemies in his story are not the Soviets,

but instead a host of different groups inside the American national security establishment who were unsympathetic to his goal of building more ships.

Almost everyone connected with the Carter Administration is an enemy, as are liberal intellectuals and journalists, who are labeled "deten-tists." It should be noted, however, that the Secretary, who stands on the far right of the American political spectrum, uses the "liberal" label liberally. "Armchair strategists" are another of his bêtes noires. These are mainly civilians at think tanks who have no prior service in the military and who disagree with Lehman. Europeanists or "central front fundamentalists" also come in for criticism, but the most dangerous enemies in Lehman's periscope are the bureaucrats in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He tells us, for example, that OSD's "entrenched anti-naval orthodoxy" was so strong that it convinced Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to stop speaking in public about the need for naval superiority, a favorite theme of Lehman's.

Formidable as this threat environment was, however, Lehman never lost a pitched battle involving the 600-ship Navy during his tenure. The reason for this success is quite straightforward. Lehman was a remarkably skillful bureaucratic infighter who had no match inside the Reagan Administration. He was also well qualified to do battle for the Navy outside the confines of the executive branch but still inside the Beltway.

Lehman was a "combat veteran" whose past experiences in battle had prepared him well for his tenure at the helm of the Navy. He was not a combat veteran in the literal sense of the term, however. In fact, when numbers of his generation were off fighting in Southeast Asia, he managed to avoid active military service by first going to graduate school and then taking a job on Henry Kissinger's National Security Council staff in 1969. His combat was instead in Washington's bureaucratic wars and, as is clear from *Command of the Seas*, he learned many relevant lessons during his service in the Nixon and Ford Administrations. When he finally left government in 1977 at the tender age of 34 and with eight years of bureaucratic warfare under his belt, he was well prepared for the tests he would face in the Reagan Administration. He had, to use his own words, "experienced some epic Washington combats and had the confidence earned by those scars."

It is hardly controversial at this juncture to argue that the Reagan Administration's defense buildup was *not* guided by a carefully thought-out strategic rationale which paid careful attention to external threats. For anyone who has doubts on that score and for anyone who wants to know more about why we got so little bang for the buck from the Reagan spending spree, *Command of the Seas* is important reading. It makes clear that bureaucratic politics overwhelmed international politics, and moreover that there was no better bureaucratic warrior in the Reagan Pentagon than John Lehman. □

# The "Demise" of NATO: A Postmortem

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A funny thing happened to the NATO allies as they made their way through the 1980s. A decade that began with predictions of NATO's impending demise has instead witnessed the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, the virtual collapse of communist rule in Eastern Europe, a partial withdrawal of Soviet forces from East Germany, and demands by the governments of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from their territory as well.<sup>1</sup> What many observers perceived as a succession of all-time lows in the European-American relationship at the start of the 1980s has gradually been transformed into a latter-day Golden Age during which the NATO allies hung together in the face of adversity and thereby contributed to outcomes that have made Europe more peaceful and more secure than at any time since the emergence of the modern state-system.<sup>2</sup>

How did all this come to be? Why did predictions of NATO's imminent demise prove so wrong? The rest of this essay takes the form of an exercise in retrospection—a postmortem, if you will, for a patient whose death appears to have been reported very prematurely. Its subject will be the perils inherent in speculative guesses about the future of a complex institution that has more than once confounded the judgments of experts about its vitality and future prospects. The essay's purpose is largely cautionary: if reports at the start of the 1980s of NATO's demise were greatly overstated, then judgments that the Cold War has ended with a victory for the West may themselves be treated as the product of an unwarranted euphoria in just a few years time.

Many of the predictions of the demise of NATO that were offered at the start of the 1980s are rooted, in a paradoxical way, in the changes in the military balance in Europe that began toward the end of the 1960s. Between 1968 and 1977, the combined armed forces of the Warsaw Pact countries increased by about 11 percent, from 4.27 million to 4.75 million.<sup>3</sup> The largest increases were made by the three Warsaw Pact states directly opposite the core of NATO strength along the Central Front. Soviet, Polish, and East German forces increased by 14, 12, and 25 percent respectively; Czech forces declined by a fifth; Rumanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian forces remained about the same.

These increases were not matched by the NATO countries. Instead, the combined armed forces of the NATO countries declined in size for nine consecutive years between 1968 and 1977. Much of the decline was accounted for by reductions in American forces due to the disengagement from Indochina, but most of the European allies reduced their forces as well. Overall, the armed forces of the NATO countries decreased by 26 percent between 1968 and 1977, from 6.52 million to 4.83 million. By 1977, the NATO total was only 1.5 percent larger than that of the Warsaw Pact, the least favorable ratio for the period 1960-1982.<sup>4</sup>

A more troubling development was the increase in the offensive striking power of Soviet ground and tactical air units during the 1970s. Between 1969 and 1977, the number of troops in combat and direct support units deployed by the Warsaw Pact in the center and northern regions increased by only two percent, but the number of tanks increased by 64 percent. The number of Soviet tactical aircraft deployed in Eastern Europe increased by 15 percent between 1967 and 1977, and the Soviets further increased the offensive striking power of their tactical air units by replacing older single-purpose aircraft with modern multi-role aircraft with increased range and payload.<sup>5</sup> Overall during the 1970s, the Soviets were able to erode many of the qualitative advantages in equipment and training that the NATO countries had relied on to offset the Warsaw Pact's superior numbers of combat units and tanks.

The effect of these shifts in the military balance was to greatly improve the ability of the Soviets and their allies to launch an attack along the Central Front that would come with little or no warning. The early 1970s, however, were

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characterized on the NATO side by reluctance to strengthen NATO's conventional forces to offset increases by the Warsaw Pact. Beginning in 1973 the NATO countries sought to stabilize the military balance in Europe through the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations with the Warsaw Pact. American officials exhorted their European counterparts to increase or at least maintain the size of their forces, but these appeals appear to have been aimed mostly at heading off pressure from Senator Mike Mansfield and others to reduce American troop strength in Europe. Whatever their intent, these appeals proved singularly ineffective: even as the MBFR talks proceeded inconclusively, the NATO countries made further unilateral cuts in their forces. Between 1973 and 1977 the armed forces of the NATO countries declined by about 400,000 while those of the Warsaw Pact countries rose by about 300,000.<sup>6</sup> Scholarly discussions of the military balance in Europe focused on reorganizing allied forces to permit further reductions in troop strength along the Central Front.<sup>7</sup>

Despite these adverse trends, the period 1968-1977 appears in retrospect as a relatively tranquil one in the history of NATO. With the exception of the recriminations exchanged by Americans and Europeans over the Yom Kippur War,<sup>8</sup> there was little talk of the demise of NATO.<sup>9</sup> The December 1976 meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Brussels was described in press reports as "one of the most harmonious in a long time."<sup>10</sup> It was only *after* the Carter Administration had unveiled an ambitious set of proposals to redress the shifting military balance in Europe that talk of NATO's demise began in earnest.

Spurred on by the personal interest of the newly elected President, Carter's Defense Department made NATO its "first order of business," and within three months of the inauguration a series of memoranda detailing an action program for the alliance had been drafted within the Pentagon and approved by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown.<sup>11</sup> Underlying this burst of activity was a concern within the Carter Administration that the shifts in the military balance that had occurred during the 1970s could, if left unchecked, render useless the main elements of NATO's strategy for deterrence and defense.

NATO planning during the Nixon and Ford years had been based on the assumption that the Warsaw Pact countries would require 30 days to mobilize before an attack. Even if NATO's decision to mobilize lagged a week behind that of the Pact, NATO would still have roughly three weeks in which to mobilize reserves and bring up reinforcements. Soviet improvements during the 1970s in the offensive striking power of their forces led officials in the Carter Administration to question whether that much warning time would be available in a crisis. They proposed instead that NATO forces should be prepared to meet and defeat a Warsaw Pact attack launched after only five to seven days of visible preparations.<sup>12</sup>

The Carter Administration also questioned whether NATO forces were still capable of implementing an effective forward defense, whereby a

Soviet attack would be met as far to the east as possible in order to minimize destruction in the NATO countries and to ensure West Germany's support for the alliance. An interagency review of the global military balance sent to the President in June 1977 concluded that the Warsaw Pact countries had achieved a 2:1 advantage in forces along the Central Front as a result of their improvements made during the 1970s. While this advantage was deemed "too small in itself for the attacker to have any expectation of quick or substantial victory," the report concluded that "the chance of NATO stopping an attack with minimal loss of territory and then achieving its full objective of recovering that land which had been lost appears remote at the present time."<sup>13</sup>

Finally, officials in the Carter Administration questioned whether the NATO countries could continue to rely on threats of escalation across the nuclear threshold to compensate for deficiencies in their conventional forces. NATO doctrine had always been vague on whether the role of nuclear weapons would be to blunt an attack through strikes on military targets or to coerce the Soviets into halting an attack through punitive strikes in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union. The report on the global military balance sidestepped that issue, raising instead the question of whether introducing nuclear weapons would work to NATO's advantage at all: "If NATO's first use of nuclear weapons, rather than terminating hostilities, provoked a Soviet nuclear response, the consequences are not clear, but it is doubtful that [the West] would thereby obtain a military advantage and be able to reverse a losing situation."<sup>14</sup>

These considerations led the Carter Administration to conclude that NATO's first priority should be to strengthen its conventional forces and especially their ability to counter a Warsaw Pact attack launched with little or no warning. The centerpiece of the Administration's efforts to persuade the Europeans to join in an alliance-wide effort to achieve these goals was the set of proposals presented personally by President Carter during a NATO summit in London in May 1977. Because the military balance had been shifting against the West for nearly a decade, the President proposed that the alliance undertake a three-part program: first, several "quick fixes" intended to remedy its most pressing problems immediately; second, a Long-Term Defense Program aimed at improving cooperation in the development, production, and procurement of vital military equipment; and finally a multi-year commitment to real annual increases in defense spending.<sup>15</sup>

Formally, the response of the European allies was prompt and positive. The London summit was followed within a week by a meeting of defense ministers in Brussels, which accepted an American proposal for a one-year program of quick fixes that would provide increased anti-armor capability along the Central Front, increased war reserve stocks, and an improved capability to reinforce areas under attack. The ministers also agreed to draft a seven- to ten-year program focused on other high-priority needs. Finally, the ministers agreed that

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during the period 1979-1984, "an annual increase in real terms of defense budgets should be aimed at by all member countries . . . in the region of 3 percent."<sup>16</sup>

Implementation of the quick fixes proceeded relatively smoothly. During 1977 and 1978, the number of modern antitank guided missiles stockpiled by the NATO countries increased by a third, ammunition stockpiles were increased, and ammunition supplies were moved forward to improve reaction time in the event of a surprise attack.<sup>17</sup> The Long-Term Defense Program also got off to a relatively smooth start. In response to suggestions offered by the United States, the NATO defense ministers at their May 1977 meeting selected nine priority areas for inclusion. Task forces were organized to fill in details. The final draft of the LTDP was approved by defense ministers in May 1978 and ratified at the NATO summit in Washington that same month.<sup>18</sup>

Implicit in the LTDP was the assumption that only modest improvements in NATO's conventional forces were required. They needed to be strong enough to preclude a quick and easy victory by the Soviets, but not so powerful as to disturb the rough equilibrium that the Soviets had tolerated for more than 30 years. Some important steps were taken during 1978 and 1979 to attend to the imbalance that had developed during the previous ten years, but on the whole implementation of the LTDP during its first two years was sluggish and uneven.<sup>19</sup> Adherence to the commitment to increase defense spending by three percent in real terms was also spotty. The slippage between the commitments made in 1977 and 1978 and what was actually accomplished in 1978 and 1979 took on added importance in the aftermath of the seizure of the American Embassy in Tehran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan toward the end of 1979.

The Carter Administration responded to the turmoil in Iran and Afghanistan by dispatching two carrier task forces to the Arabian Sea; by opening negotiations for access to air and naval facilities in Kenya, Oman, Somalia, and Diego Garcia; and by adding several billion dollars to the FY81 defense budget to provide the ships and aircraft needed to make the Rapid Deployment Force a reality. The order to organize an RDF had been issued by President Carter in

August 1977 in the same directive (PD-18) that had ordered enhancement of the ability of American forces in Europe to respond to short- or no-warning attacks. PD-18 envisioned the RDF as a light, mobile force organized around the Army's 82d Airborne and 101st Air-Mobile Divisions and a Marine Amphibious Force. PD-18's directives to strengthen American forces in Europe and to create a Rapid Deployment Force for Third World contingencies was symbolic of the Carter Administration's tendency during its first three years in office to compartmentalize these tasks and to overlook or deny the existence of trade-offs between them—an outlook that was fostered by a certain overconfidence concerning the ability of the RDF to prevail, even against the Soviets, in a Middle Eastern conflict.<sup>20</sup> These judgments were reevaluated in the harsh light of the hostage crisis, the sacking of the American Embassies in Pakistan and Libya, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, all of which seemed to portend for a few bleak months during the winter of 1979-80 the virtual collapse of American influence in a region of great strategic importance.

As the Carter Administration scrambled to assemble the forces and bases needed to give credibility to the President's pledge to defend the oil fields located near the Persian Gulf, officials in Washington became very much aware of the extent to which the new responsibilities being undertaken by the United States conflicted with earlier commitments to upgrade American forces in Europe. The heightened concern over Soviet intentions in the aftermath of Afghanistan meant that the number of divisions earmarked for the RDF increased to the point where it began to cut into units assigned to reinforce Europe. The Carter Administration also worried that a Persian Gulf contingency would so strain American airlift forces that it would not be possible to divert many transport aircraft to ferry reinforcements to Europe in the event the conflict spread. In addition, the Administration's plan to stockpile military equipment aboard ships in the Indian Ocean seemed likely to cut into plans to pre-position additional equipment in Europe. Finally, the diversion of a carrier task force from the Mediterranean to the Arabian Sea reduced the naval and tactical airpower the United States could bring to bear along NATO's southern flank.<sup>21</sup>

One immediate effect of these concerns was renewed pressure on the Europeans to increase their defense efforts. During February-March 1980, the State and Defense Departments prepared a package of measures that the Europeans would be asked to undertake. These were presented by Undersecretary of Defense Robert Komer at a special meeting of the Defense Planning Committee in Brussels in April. Komer's presentation was intended to give the Europeans time to digest the American proposals, which the Carter Administration expected would be approved at the regular meeting of defense ministers in May.<sup>22</sup>

Komer's presentation, however, did not go over well with the Europeans, who responded with complaints about the propensity of the Americans to come in with a new program every year.<sup>23</sup> These complaints precipitated

the initial round of judgments that the NATO alliance was facing not just another crisis but its greatest crisis ever. On the eve of the ministerial meeting in May, tensions within the alliance were said to have risen to such a point that it faced a "political crossroad marked by America's preoccupation with conflicts outside Europe and Europe's heightened sense of itself."<sup>24</sup> The combination of growing Soviet power and instability in the Third World had confronted the alliance with its "worst challenge" ever, while disagreements over how to respond had resulted in "strains which arguably are worse than at any point in NATO's 31-year history."<sup>25</sup> "Instead of infusing the West with a new unity of purpose," one observer commented, "the crisis over Afghanistan has left a legacy of confusion, distrust, and resentment which, in retrospect, turns the many disputes of the past into minor family squabbles."<sup>26</sup>

Despite their grumbling, the Europeans accepted the American proposal to proceed with a new package of quick fixes while drafting for review at the December meeting of defense ministers a report that would set forth "further specific measures for prompt or accelerated implementation."<sup>27</sup> The Carter Administration, however, was not off the hook just yet. In November, the governing coalition in West Germany let it be known that it was contemplating holding real growth in defense spending to 1.8 percent in 1981, a trial balloon that coincided with pressures in Great Britain to back away from an earlier commitment to three-percent real growth in defense during 1981.<sup>28</sup> Signals from Washington that the Carter Administration was inclined to have a showdown on the issue of defense spending precipitated a new round of judgments that the alliance was in its worst state ever, many of which were overtaken by events even as they appeared in print.<sup>29</sup> The West Germans backed away from the 1.8-percent figure, and sources in Brussels let it be known that the alliance as a whole was "on target" for an overall increase in defense spending of about three percent in 1981. At the Defense Planning Committee meeting in December, the defense ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the LTDP and to the goal of three-percent real annual increases in defense spending.<sup>30</sup>

The events recounted above may seem all too familiar, especially to those who experienced them firsthand, but recalling them is instructive nonetheless. It suggests that NATO was judged to be in turmoil because it was doing what defensive alliances are supposed to do—namely, responding to shifts in the balance of power between itself and its principal adversary. Defensive alliances rarely come apart because they succeed in maintaining a power equilibrium, but they have often been shattered by war or a flight into neutralism by one or more of their members because they did not attend more carefully to power considerations.<sup>31</sup> It should come as no surprise that NATO members disagreed over how to equitably divide the burden of redressing the power imbalance that had developed during the 1970s. Restoring a balance of power is not a pleasant task, especially for democracies, because it entails steps that voting publics often find

distasteful, such as increased defense spending, draft registration, extension of the military service term, higher taxes, and bigger budget deficits. While there can be no denying that resolving such issues imposed strains on the alliance, the strains in question were relatively minor compared to those the NATO allies would have faced had they been left unresolved.

**T**he transition from Carter to Reagan brought much the same temporary glow to European-American relations that the transition from Ford to Carter had brought four years earlier. Like their predecessors, President Reagan and his associates took office convinced of the need for strong measures to redress an unfavorable balance of forces in Europe, but the objective of strengthening NATO's capabilities was pursued in such an abrasive fashion during Mr. Reagan's first term that the results achieved often seemed to be the opposite of those intended.

At the start of its tenure, the Reagan Administration attempted to distance itself from its predecessor's practice of confronting the Europeans with goals expressed in numerical or percentage terms that were to be achieved within a certain time. As explained by Deputy Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci, what the alliance needed was "more emphasis on specific force increases and defense improvements" rather than "more rhetoric or disputes about percentages."<sup>32</sup> The promise of a new approach was welcomed by the Europeans, but by the middle of 1981 the Reagan Administration and the European allies were locked in a seemingly endless set of disputes, several of which were later cited in allegations of new all-time-lows in the European-American relationship.

During the first half of 1981, the attention of participants and observers alike was focused on the clash between the Reagan Administration's commitment to substantial increases in defense spending consistent with its harder line toward the Soviet Union and the Europeans' preference for detente and arms control.<sup>33</sup> Pressures from the Reagan Administration on the Europeans to increase defense spending, to acquiesce in the American decision to produce enhanced radiation weapons, and to modernize the alliance's theater-based nuclear arsenal contributed to a resurgence of antinuclear and anti-American demonstrations in Western Europe.<sup>34</sup> Rather than treat the European peace movement as a symptom of societies troubled by their lingering dependence on the United States and in need of reassurance, the Reagan Administration equated it with a failure of nerve in the face of Soviet military might. American officials complained that neutralism and pacifism were spreading in Western Europe, while the Europeans complained of insensitive statements by their American counterparts that needlessly complicated their efforts to win support for the alliance's programs.<sup>35</sup> Lectures by American officials on the proper way to counter the Soviet threat appear to have deepened rather than alleviated the anxieties felt by European publics. Indeed, it was such

anxieties that lay behind Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's remonstrance to his countrymen to "stop behaving as if the Americans are your enemies."<sup>36</sup>

The rhetorical sparring match between the Reagan Administration and the European allies provided the catalyst for still another round of judgments by journalists and academics that the alliance was facing its greatest crisis ever. By the middle of 1981 predictions of NATO's impending demise had become fairly common: "The relationship between Western Europe and North America, alias the Atlantic Alliance, is in the early stages of what could be a terminal illness. The alliance has been in trouble plenty of times before, but this is the worst yet."<sup>37</sup> "If there were no workable NATO in three years, I wouldn't be surprised."<sup>38</sup> The "most urgent crisis" facing the Reagan Administration "is the impending collapse of NATO."<sup>39</sup> Disputes over nuclear weapon issues had become so intense that "NATO now seems in danger of crumbling."<sup>40</sup>

The alliance did make it through the rest of the year, but that did not stop observers from predicting that it was about to fall apart. By the end of 1981, "The common theme on both sides of the political spectrum, and on both sides of the Atlantic, was that the Alliance had never been so gravely troubled and so uncertainly led."<sup>41</sup> Something must be done, one observer concluded, "if NATO is not to go the way of SEATO and CENTO, those Asian and Middle Eastern cold-war alliances that died quiet deaths with hardly anybody caring."<sup>42</sup> By the middle of 1982, relations between the United States and Europe were said to "have reached the lowest point in years, perhaps since the Atlantic Alliance was founded in 1949."<sup>43</sup> Even officials in Washington, normally inclined to be defensive about their handling of relations with the European allies, conceded that the "developing split in the West" was "one of the worst since World War II."<sup>44</sup>

During 1984, however, both the tone and the substance of American policy toward Europe changed considerably, a development that appears to have been due largely to the intensification of the Soviet-American dialogue which began during President Reagan's campaign for reelection. During Mr. Reagan's first term, American officials had been inclined to lecture the Europeans on their lack of understanding of the danger posed by the Soviet Union. By the time of the Geneva summit, the Soviets were no longer the "focus of evil" but rather partners in the search for negotiated arms reductions. During President Reagan's first term, arms control initiatives had been viewed as public relations exercises intended to placate European publics or as delaying tactics to buy time for the Administration's rearmament program to establish a margin of superiority over the Soviets.<sup>45</sup> During the second term, arms control initiatives were pursued more seriously, culminating in the INF Treaty which banned the deployment by the United States and the Soviet Union of all but short-range nuclear missiles in Europe. During Reagan's first term, American defense spending rose at an average annual rate of 8.3 percent measured in real terms, and American officials

had frequently criticized the Europeans for failing to emulate the United States in this respect.<sup>46</sup> Beginning in fiscal 1986, American defense spending declined in real terms, a trend that continued throughout Reagan's second term, making it difficult for American officials to argue that the Europeans were the ones who were not pulling their weight.

History is often written in terms of turning points and dramatic developments, but sometimes it is useful to contemplate what did not happen as well as what did. Among the more interesting developments of the past decade are certain events that did not occur despite claims that they were practically inevitable. The NATO alliance did not collapse, nor did NATO governments "tremble and even fall" under the weight of divisive issues such as modernization of theater nuclear forces.<sup>47</sup> Afghanistan, INF, and the disagreement over the Soviet natural gas pipeline were all cited as qualitatively different crises that would bend the alliance to the breaking point, yet in retrospect their effects appear to have been no more serious or lasting than those stemming from earlier disagreements over German rearmament, the European Defense Community, and even Suez.<sup>48</sup> Soviet military power did not expand inexorably; indeed, a strong case can be made that at the very time NATO strategy was derided as being "in pieces, demolished by changes in the east-west balance of power," the Soviets were reaching the limits of their capability to support continued increases in military spending and beginning the process of rethinking that culminated half a decade later in *glasnost* and *perestroika*.<sup>49</sup> Nor did Soviet influence expand in keeping with alarmist predictions that received considerable play in the Western media at the start of the 1980s. Soviet "allies," both in Eastern Europe and in the Third World, appear increasingly as liabilities rather than assets—as drains on Soviet resources rather than contributors to a communist colossus. Alleged trends toward neutralism and pacifism in Western Europe also proved to be greatly overplayed—the product mainly of exaggerated judgments by observers stunned by encounters with alienated intellectuals or the results of isolated public opinion polls.<sup>50</sup>

How could so many have been so wrong about the alliance's future health and well-being? During the Carter years, NATO was often judged to be "in crisis" because it was doing what defensive alliances are supposed to do—respond to threatening imbalances of power. During the Reagan years, European-American relations were frequently judged to have hit new all-time lows because of disagreements between the United States and its European allies. Put differently, NATO was often judged to be on the brink of disintegration because the Europeans were acting like the kind of independent-minded partners the United States has always claimed to prefer.

It is helpful to recall in this regard that American entry into the Atlantic Alliance was justified by the Truman Administration not on the grounds that it would allow a permanent foothold in Europe, but as a means of disengaging from Europe without creating a dangerous power vacuum in



the process.<sup>51</sup> The purpose of the alliance was to buy time to allow the Europeans to strengthen themselves, after which an American presence in Europe was expected to be superfluous.

The framers of the North Atlantic Treaty can be criticized for an excessively optimistic vision of how the alliance was to work, but they were right on the mark in their recognition that strong allies are preferable to weak ones. It is very likely not an accident that the most self-reliant of the countries of Western Europe—France—is also the country that has the least vocal and least influential peace movement, that has been the most critical of Soviet policies, and that was the most supportive of the American position on the need to modernize the alliance's theater nuclear forces. Doing business with strong partners is rarely easy—strong allies are likely to be assertive, and assertiveness can take the form of positions that American officials occasionally find unpalatable. Relations may be strained and even tumultuous at times, but which is better: allies that are not afraid to stand up for themselves, or clients forever dependent on the protection of a patron? Encouraging self-reliance on the part of one's allies is the path most likely to lead to better relations over the long-term; dependence only breeds resentment and irritability.

Americans as a people have long been drawn to the idea that there are no political problems, only organizational problems. If allies do not appear to be working together effectively, the typical American response is that they need to "get organized," and American officials have searched restlessly for the organizational form that would allow NATO to function to its fullest potential. This propensity for organizational solutions, however, has made Americans particularly susceptible to distress and dismay when organizations show signs of strain. When the Europeans fail to offer immediate support to schemes hatched in Washington or go ahead with something even though we ask them not to, the situation is usually described by American observers as exceptionally grave, as yet another crisis for NATO, and sometimes as a precursor of the alliance's impending demise. Meg Greenfield was uncomfortably close to the truth when she wrote in May 1980, "Everyone knows [NATO] is in terrible disarray just now. It says so in the papers."<sup>52</sup>

This essay has suggested that Americans have been prone to respond with exaggerated claims to what have proven to be relatively minor stresses and strains of the sort that are quite normal for an alliance made up of actual or aspiring democratic states. The true test of the efficacy of the Atlantic Alliance is not how often the members are in complete agreement with each other but rather the extent to which it can continue to make progress toward the ideal originally espoused in the preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty: to establish and maintain a community of free states which would help each other remain independent and gradually grow closer together as the benefits of such a community became more apparent. The events of the past decade, especially the renewed

impetus toward European integration evident in "Europe 1992," suggest that the members of the alliance have continued to make progress toward that goal.

The events of the past forty years, however, suggest that such progress does not come cheaply or easily. The "spirit of Geneva," the "spirit of Camp David," and detente during the 1960s and the 1970s were all followed by renewed periods of East-West tension. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* are welcome developments in Soviet policy, but just as reports of NATO's demise now appear to have been greatly overstated, so too, in a few years time, may reports that the Cold War has ended with a victory for the West seem similarly overstated. Czarist Russia was a tenacious competitor for territory and influence whose behavior suggested that it regarded eastern Europe and south-west and central Asia as its natural spheres of influence. It would seem highly unlikely that even a Soviet Union committed to internal reform would suddenly abandon foreign policy goals rooted in centuries of Russian history. It would be a tragic irony if unwarranted euphoria were now to result in what unwarranted pessimism was unable to bring about at the start of the 1980s, namely, NATO's premature demise.

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# Cowards, Comrades, and Killer Angels: The Soldier in Literature

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Generals have since written accounts of these events (on the East Front), locating particular catastrophes, and summarizing in a sentence, or a few lines, the losses from sickness or freezing. But they never, to my knowledge, give sufficient expression to the wretchedness of soldiers abandoned to a fate one would wish to spare even the most miserable cur.

— Guy Sajer  
*The Forgotten Soldier*

Sajer's harsh indictment rings true. Generals, in recounting the big picture, often give short shrift to the horror of war at the soldier's level. Historians are equally culpable, recording only the objective events—dates, places, and orders of battle—not the confused, constricted view from the foxhole or tank hatch.

This is not to say that big-picture accounts are unimportant. Understanding war at the operational level is critical. But studying military history and the memoirs of senior generals is not enough. Leaders must also understand the human dimension of war at the lowest level. One valuable source of insight is often overlooked—the experiences of soldiers at war as recounted in fiction and personal accounts. As Colonel Henry Gole, US Army Ret., said in a recent article in *Military Review*, fictional accounts of battle helped one green soldier weather his first war: "My experience as a young infantry soldier in Korea convinced me that having read *The Red Badge of Courage*, *All Quiet*

on the Western Front, *From Here to Eternity*, and *The Naked and the Dead* prepared me better for war than any history I had read to that date."

Exactly what lessons are to be learned from these books? Even a brief review of the literature of war immediately uncovers two dominant themes: First, in combat all soldiers are afraid; second, this fear, coupled with shared hardships, drives soldiers into a close relationship with one another. A third theme, less obvious, more sinister, and more pervasive than expected, is that of a certain zest for war and destruction which, when carried to extremes, is best represented by a type of soldier Michael Shaara called the "killer angel."

I did not use any special method in selecting the fiction and soldier memoirs that will be used to illustrate these themes. Most are from recent wars, and generally represent both sides of the fighting. The authors of the fictional accounts cited had firsthand military experience with the exception of Stephen Crane, who wrote *The Red Badge of Courage* based largely on his reading of Tolstoy and about the battles and leaders of the Civil War. Many of the fictional works are largely autobiographical, some extremely so.

### ***Cowards***

Lieutenant Henry: They won't get us, because you're too brave. Nothing ever happens to the brave.

Catherine (his nurse): They die of course.

Henry: But only once.

Catherine: I don't know. Who said that?

Henry: The coward dies a thousand deaths, the brave but one?

Catherine: Of course, who said it?

Henry: I don't know.

Catherine: He was probably a coward. He knew a great deal about cowards but nothing about the brave. The brave dies perhaps two thousand deaths if he's intelligent. He simply doesn't mention them.

— Hemingway

*A Farewell to Arms*

Given similar combat settings, what separates the coward from the brave is neither the presence, nor even the intensity, of fear. Audie Murphy, our country's most decorated soldier in World War II, repeatedly faced combat

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with a gut full of fear: "It strikes first in the stomach, coming like the disembowling hand that is thrust into the carcass of a chicken. I feel now as though icy fingers have reached into my mid-parts and twisted the intestines into knots" (*To Hell and Back*).

What is the nature of this fear that "twists the intestines" with "icy fingers"? What, exactly, does the soldier fear? Obviously he fears death, but as in all dealings with emotions, it is far more complicated than that. For many soldiers facing their first combat, fear of death is overshadowed by a fear that they will not stand up to the rigors of battle—that they will not measure up to their comrades or to their responsibilities or, worse, that they will freeze or flee. This fear gnaws at Henry Fleming, the Union soldier in Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. For days, as Fleming and his green New York regiment wait for their first battle at Chancellorsville, he agonizes over how he will react: "A little panic-fear grew in his mind" as "it had suddenly appeared to him that perhaps in a battle he might run."

The leader on the verge of his first battle is doubly plagued by fears and self-doubts. Not only must he overcome the normal fear of death, and not only must he measure up, but as the leader he must also take charge. In *And No Birds Sang*, Farley Mowat, a Canadian infantry platoon leader in World War II, after being selected to lead a 20-man assault party "was quivering with internal tremors, not so much at the prospect of what the enemy might do but at the thought of having to measure up to what would be required" of him. Lieutenant James McDonough (*Platoon Leader*) shares similar feelings before departing on his first combat patrol in Vietnam: "Even more awe-inspiring than the scenery was the realization that whatever took place in this part of the world, whatever these men did or whatever happened to them, was my responsibility. . . . I felt I was living a lie: I was trying desperately to learn what I was already supposed to know."

Not surprisingly, some soldiers can't bear up to the added pressure of leadership. Guy Sajer, an East Front infantryman in World War II, after proving his personal bravery any number of times during two years of fighting, chokes when put in charge of an antitank ambush team, unable to provide the leadership needed in the middle of a desperate and uneven battle between Russian tanks and German infantry: "I was there, fully conscious, aware of everything, but paralyzed by insurmountable panic. I shall never forgive myself for that instant, when reality touched the deepest recesses of my being. . . . Fear nailed me where I was" (*The Forgotten Soldier*).

Some soldiers find on the eve of battle that they have even more to fear than death, mutilation, or failure to measure up to their responsibilities. Just before landing in Sicily, Mowat discovered one of his men standing at attention in the troopship head rotely practicing his manual of arms, ashen-faced and crying uncontrollably: "I had never seen anyone give way to fear

before, and I could not comprehend how Sully could collapse like that even *before* the guns began to fire. My God, I thought, if it can happen to him. . . . A jagged sliver of self-doubt slipped between my ribs." The possibility of "cracking up," "combat fatigue," "shell shock," or whatever is not a subject much dwelt upon in formal military education, but it is pervasive in the literature of war. Mowat's Private Sully boarded a landing craft with his platoon and went to the beaches of Sicily. After all the soldiers had supposedly debarked, Mowat looked back to see a "small khaki figure standing stiffly at attention in the gaping opening. Suddenly he began to move, *marching* up the ramp, rifle at the slope, free arm swinging level with his shoulders. Tiny Sully was coming off that sardine can as if on ceremonial parade . . . except that his eyes were screwed tight shut." Sully is killed a moment later by a mortar burst.

Thus soldiers have many fears in anticipation of battle, and this fear is too much for some. Crane's Henry Fleming, the Union soldier so afraid of cowardice, does indeed flee from his first battle, and the remainder of Crane's classic is devoted to portraying how Fleming eventually rejoins his unit, regains his confidence, and becomes one of his regiment's bravest soldiers. By the end of the story, Fleming has attained a serene, almost sublime, state: "He knew that he would no more quail before his guides wherever they should point. He had been to touch the great death, and found that, after all, it was but the great death. He was a man." Here Crane's story rings false—the sane soldier never reconciles himself to his own death, try as he might.

The literature of war tells us that those soldiers who truly do reconcile themselves to death very promptly die. Mowat, a great chronicler of the progressively damaging effects of fear, tells of a stretcher-bearer who, after months of combat, strode naked toward the enemy lines singing "Home on the Range" at the top of his lungs. He had been possessed by the worm of fear "that never dies," the worm that gnaws inside all soldiers. Mowat's father, a World War I infantryman, writing to his son about similar events, told of two comrades who "committed suicide on the Line. They did not shoot themselves—they let the Germans do it because they had reached the end of the tether." Those unhinged soldiers, unlike Crane's Fleming, were truly resigned to death.

Had Crane carried his story on to Fleming's next battle, for the sake of honesty he would have had to portray a veteran soldier reentering the smoke of battle not serenely, but with reawakened fear, just as McDonough, back on patrol in Vietnam after recovering from a wound, is more afraid than before because he knows what he is in for: "I felt I was going to die, and I began to grieve—for myself, for my wife, for the little boy who would never really know his father. Sweat poured . . . from my every joint." McDonough quickly pulled himself together, however, thanks to another fear, that of not measuring up: "Somehow, I kept moving, I could not allow myself to appear cowardly in the eyes of those men." Audie Murphy, talking to a soldier freshly returned to the lines after



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***“... A jagged sliver of self-doubt  
slipped between my ribs.”***

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recovery from his wounds, hears a similar tale of renewed and stronger fears. As the returnee explained: “Lying there in the hospital, a man has too much time to think. And that’s bad. He gets in the mood to live again.”

Perhaps some soldiers are able to reconcile themselves to their own deaths, but one suspects that, like Siegfried Sassoon’s pseudonymous George Sherston, their attempts to do so are self-deceptive. Sherston, a World War I British infantry officer on the Western Front, seems to persuade himself that he “had more or less made up his mind to die; the idea made things easier.” Yet before his participation in a trench raid, “the fear of death and the horror of mutilation” took hold of his heart. Then, following the raid, he “felt a wild exultation. Behind . . . were the horror and the darkness. . . . It was splendid to be still alive” (*The Memoirs of George Sherston*). Not exactly the feelings of a soldier already resigned to the grave.

Thus, for the sane soldier who holds life dear, fear is an ever-present companion, and, not surprisingly, its effects can be progressively debilitating. Farley Mowat describes this dreadful process in detail. Mowat is initially brave to the point of recklessness, but after repeated exposures to death, such as the “undiluted terror” of a German rocket attack, he feels a growing sense of dread—when will his luck run out? This dread eventually overpowers him: “I was sickening with the most virulent and dreadful of all apprehensions . . . the fear of fear itself.” Going on his umpteenth patrol, Mowat is “convinced that death or ghastly mutilation awaited me . . . . The certainty was absolute! The Worm that was growing in my gut had told me so.” Finally, Mowat runs from a battle, only to be stopped in flight by a fellow platoon leader and given a stiff drink. Not long afterward, Mowat takes a “previously despised job at Brigade Headquarters,” with the unstated implication (the book ends at this point) that he had reached his limit.

Mowat is not unique. Audie Murphy undergoes a similar process as he fights across Western Europe with the 3d Infantry Division. Seeing his comrades killed or wounded until he is the last of the original group, he wonders when “his number will be up.” Murphy, who earlier in the war described his disdain for a soldier who cracked, feels differently after months of combat: “Which of us knows when his own nerves may collapse?” Other soldiers come to this realization as well. Tank platoon leader Robert Crisp, in his excellent book *Brazen Chariots*, describes coming to the end of his rope during a grueling battle in North Africa in World War II. By the fourth day, a

spirit of adventure is replaced by "grimness and fear and a perpetual, mounting weariness of body and spirit." After more than 20 days of battle, Crisp's sustaining feeling that "it can't happen to me" is replaced by "a moment of realization that made me very afraid, I knew I had lost my immunity"—not surprising after having several tanks shot out from under him, and at one point losing his entire platoon to antitank fire. After being seriously wounded during his 29th day of battle, Crisp suffers through an air raid at his hospital: "We lay and waited, shivering, for the next noise. I found my mind murmuring: 'Please God, not on the ward. Please God, not on the ward.' And knew that, finally, my battered nerve was broken."

Sometimes a soldier cracks but is able to recover. McDonough describes a time in Vietnam when, during a badly organized night ambush, he is almost killed at point-blank range by his own men: "A few minutes earlier I had been an effective platoon leader doing his job. Now I could actually feel my chest throbbing against the dirt where I lay. . . . I could not think. My body began to tremble, then shiver, then shake uncontrollably." McDonough lay there all night, not stirring until first light, even though a nearby ant colony crawled over him and he was pelted with the monsoon rains. McDonough's lapse into terror over a botched nighttime ambush was temporary. The momentary terror of heavy shellfire can be similarly transient. Guy Sajer describes the brief horror that overcame him after a direct hit on his bunker: "With a roar, the earth poured in and covered us. In that moment, so close to death, I was seized by a rush of terror so powerful that I felt my mind was cracking. Trapped by the weight of the earth, I began to howl like a madman."

While fear is the main catalyst in the soldier's gradual disintegration, other factors enter. Exhaustion, hunger, cold, darkness, scorching heat, and sickness also take their toll. These conditions heighten fear's effects, helping to break down the defenses erected against war's horrors. It is after all the ability to erect defenses against fear's devastating effects that distinguishes the brave from the coward. Leaders can do much to mitigate the damage inflicted by miserable conditions in the war zone. Crisp describes the recuperative effect of simply allowing his tankers time to wash, to cook a hot meal, and to enjoy that most critical of all British morale boosters, a "brew up" of hot tea. Sassoon's Sherston always marveled at the soldiers' ability to recover given an opportunity: "Twenty-four hours' rest and a shave had worked the usual miracle with the troops (psychological recovery was a problem which no one had time to recognize as existent)."

While easing physical discomfort and providing time for rest will help restore morale, these basic measures will not directly relieve the ever-present burden of fear. Soldiers must deal personally with fear, and they do so in a variety of ways. Some of their methods appear quite irrational from the perspective of peacetime, but they work nonetheless for the soldier in the

trenches. The most common defense against fear is the belief that "it can't happen to me." While this belief seems to defy reality, the literature of war tells us that it is a sustaining rationale held by soldiers under fire. Crisp, on the eve of battle in North Africa, had already experienced war in Greece, particularly the scourge of the *Luftwaffe*, but he nevertheless felt safe: "Not for one moment did I contemplate the possibility of anything unpleasant, and with that went an assumption that there was bound to be a violent encounter with the enemy, that it would end in our favour, and that if anything terrible were going to happen it would probably happen to other people and not to me." Frederick Downs, a platoon leader with the 4th Infantry Division in Vietnam, reviewed his company's morning strength report on the eve of his first day of combat, noting that the entries for "killed in action" and "wounded in action" were no longer abstractions: "Tomorrow I would be a candidate for both categories." Nevertheless, he "dismissed the thought of dying. A slight wound for my career maybe, but nothing worse" (*The Killing Zone: My Life in the Vietnam War*).

The feeling that it can't happen to me can sustain a soldier through a great deal of fighting. Downs still felt charmed after five months of hard fighting: "I had been wounded four times, winning three Purple Hearts. My men thought I was invulnerable; I did too." Downs apparently felt that way right up to the moment when he stepped on a land mine, losing his left arm and nearly his life. For most soldiers, however, the moment comes when the assumption of personal invulnerability wanes, to be replaced by a feeling that "sooner or later my number will come up." Audie Murphy, Robert Crisp, and Farley Mowat all went through this transition.

Once this occurs, the soldier must find a new defense against fear. He comes to feel that his supposed invulnerability is gone and that as his exposure is prolonged his number will inevitably come up. At that point, his main defense is to not think about the future or the horrors of the past. Paul Baumer, a World War I German infantryman in Erich Maria Remarque's famous novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*, eloquently describes this defense mechanism while his company is on a break from the front line:

Yesterday we were under fire, today we act the fool and go foraging through the countryside, tomorrow we go up to the trenches again. We forget nothing really, but so long as we have to stay here in the field, the frontline days, when they are past, sink down in us like a stone; they are too serious for us to be able to reflect on them at once. If we did that, we should be destroyed long ago. I soon found out this much—terror can be endured so long as a man simply ducks—but it kills if a man thinks about it.

The frontline soldier thus lives from day to day. This goes a long way toward explaining the wild behavior of soldiers when out of the line. In *Those*

*Devils in Baggy Pants*, Ross Carter, a paratrooper in the 82d Airborne in World War II, describes the reveling, boozing, and skirt-chasing during the rare reprieves from combat. Carter can "neither condone nor justify" his own and his comrades' conduct, but he "can understand why we acted as we did." This "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die" attitude is difficult for noncombatants to understand, particularly if the revelry is at their expense, but it is the soldiers' way of drowning the past and tuning out the future.

Those soldiers who insist on thinking about the future often see a grim picture of their own demise. Not unnaturally, some begin to think that a wound serious enough to keep them from further combat would be welcome. This hope for the "million-dollar wound," a pervasive theme in the literature of war, is another defense against fear—with luck a soldier will be only wounded, not horribly maimed or killed. The million-dollar wound was a favorite topic of conversation among the Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon members in Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*. The I & R Platoon, fighting the Japanese in World War II, envied those who got out with a lucky wound:

Gallagher: The Army got the f-ggin percentages on their side, you can't even get a wound and get out where it's worth it.

Stanley: I'd take a foot anytime. I'd sign the papers for it now.

Martinez: Me too. Not so hard. Toglio, elbow shot up, he get out.

Wilson: Goddam, ain't that somethin! Ah tell you, men, Ah don' even 'member what that chickenshit Toglio looks like any more, But Ah'll never forget he got out on a busted elbow.

Indeed, soldiers more seriously wounded than Toglio were content with their fate, knowing that they were not going back to the front. Audie Murphy tells of a soldier who had lost a leg: "He was as happy as a catbird in a cherry tree. Shipping out for home next week. Wisconsin. Figures he'll be out of the Army by the time fishing season opens." Other soldiers have felt the same. For the British in World War I, as Sassoon tells us, the goal was a "Blighty" wound, meaning one just serious enough to get one sent back to England ("Blighty") to recuperate.

If such a wound is desirable, then the next obvious line of reasoning is, "Why wait for the enemy to do it?" And the literature of war abounds with examples of self-inflicted wounds, a subject taboo in peacetime, but one that soldiers and leaders have to deal with in war. In Arnold Zweig's powerful novel *Education Before Verdun*, a story about German soldiers in World War I, the main character, Private Bertin, an otherwise brave soldier, contemplates such a wound: "Why prolong his life from one shell-burst to the next? Why not offer fate a hand and heave up his hindquarters for the benefit of a passing splinter. He had often half resolved to let his foot be crushed by the next truck

that came along: but had never quite made up his mind." Some, of course, do make up their minds. A comrade of Bertin's has a friend drive a rusty nail through his foot and then lets the wound fester. Armies establish punishments, including the death sentence, for self-inflicted incapacitations, but the fear of harsh punishment is not always enough to deter an already scared soldier.

In the final analysis, however, the solitary soldier, regardless of his individual defenses and rationalizations, does not stand a chance alone against the gnawing worm of fear. He must rely on a stronger defense against war's horrors: the strength and courage he can draw from his comrades. As J. Glenn Gray points out in *Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle*, the soldier who cannot avail himself of his comrades' support is the coward of the next battle.

### ***Comrades***

At once a new warmth flows through me. These voices, these few quiet words, these footsteps in the trench behind me recall me at a bound from the terrible loneliness and fear of death by which I had been almost destroyed. They are more to me than life, these voices, they are more than motherliness and more than fear; they are the strongest, most comforting thing there is anywhere: they are the voices of my comrades.

— Paul Baumer in Remarque's  
*All Quiet on the Western Front*

Remarque, a veteran of the Western Front trenches, paints an exceedingly grim picture of war in *All Quiet on the Western Front*. But there is one human quality among all of war's inhumanity that Remarque and his fellow chroniclers find worthy—the spirit of comradeship. Comradeship in war is as pervasive a theme as fear; not surprising, given that comradeship is directly related to soldiers' efforts to fend off fear. For many, as for Paul Baumer, comrades are a sustaining force. Paratrooper Ross Carter reflected that "my life wasn't any more important than theirs and my number would no doubt come up, sooner or later, just as theirs had. But somehow I felt that comradeship . . . had about it a value that in itself geared me to face whatever lay ahead as well as if not better than my hatred for the enemy and his philosophy."

In war, the soldier's world narrows to his immediate surroundings. His unit and his closest comrades define the limit of his horizon, and within that horizon the soldier draws security and comfort. Things beyond it dim and lose meaning, to include the war's larger goals and even loved ones and peacetime life. Guy Chapman, a British subaltern in World War I, described in *A Passionate Prodigality* how all-encompassing the soldier's life with his comrades can become: "Looking back at those firm ranks as they marched into billets, to the Fusiliers' march, I found that the body of men had become so much a part of me that its disintegration would tear away something I cared for more dearly than I could have believed. I was it; it was I."

While true that the soldier's unit can become the be-all of his existence, Chapman's implication that a soldier cannot shift his allegiance to another group is suspect. The bonds of comradeship develop for very personal reasons—specifically as a defense against war's fears and horrors. Thus, despite the strong bonds of comradeship that a soldier may develop in one unit, if he is transferred to another he will establish new bonds and rather quickly forget the old—he must if he is to survive. The perceptive Mowat describes this process when, for a period of time, he must leave his platoon to serve as battalion intelligence officer:

I had been more firmly bound to them than many a man is to his own blood brothers, and yet, sadly, it was not a lasting tie. I would not have believed it possible, but I was to discover that after a brief separation they would become almost *irrelevant to my continuing existence* [emphasis added]. . . . I was slow to comprehend the truth; that comrades-in-arms unconsciously create from their particular selves an imponderable entity which goes its own way and has its own existence, regardless of the comings and goings of the individuals who are its constituent parts.

While this attitude may strike us as cynical, it becomes perfectly understandable when we realize that comradeship first and foremost fulfills an individual need. This does not mean that comrades fail to sacrifice, fight, and even die for each other—they do. But the reasons a soldier seeks comradeship are inherently self-serving. This explains, to some extent, the soldier's ability to feel strongly for his fellow soldiers while not dwelling upon their deaths. Remarque's Baumer, noting the loss of many comrades after a bad stretch in the line, tells us: "It is a damnable business, but what has it to do with us now—we live. If it were possible for us to save them, then it would be seen how much we cared—we would have a shot at it though we went under ourselves. . . . But our comrades are dead, and we cannot help them, they have their rest and who knows what is waiting for us?" In other words, Baumer's dead comrades—or in the case of Mowat, his former platoon members—are irrelevant to the individual's continuing existence.

Comradeship, then, in its most basic form, is a defense mechanism that a soldier relies upon to quell fears, to diminish loneliness, and to endure hardships. Yet, as we have seen, comrades often fight and die for one another. This paradox is hard to explain, but it is the key to success in battle. Comradeship in its higher form is tied to the soldier's fear of not living up to his responsibilities: at the same time that the soldier draws strength from his comrades' presence, he knows he must reciprocate by being there for them. As J. Glenn Gray points out, soldiers fight not for ideals but for each other: "Numberless soldiers have died, more or less willingly, not for country or honor or religious faith or for any other abstract good, but because they

realized that by fleeing their post and rescuing themselves, they would expose their companions to greater danger. Such loyalty to the group is the essence of fighting morale."

The literature of war provides more than ample proof for Gray's thesis. Sajer and his comrades in the *Gross Deutschland* Division "no longer fought for Hitler, or for National Socialism, or for the Third Reich—or even for our fiancées or mothers or families. . . . We fought for reasons which are perhaps shameful, but are, in the end, stronger than doctrine. We fought for ourselves, so that we wouldn't die in holes filled with mud and snow." In subtler terms, Sassoon's George Sherston says the same: "The War was too big an event for one man to stand alone in. All I knew was that I'd lost my faith in it, and there was nothing left to believe in except 'the Battalion spirit.' The Battalion spirit meant losing oneself into comfortable companionship with the officers and NCOs around one; it meant winning the respect, or even the affection, of platoon and company."

Clearly the initial motivating ideals and reasons leading men to war often fall by the wayside in the trenches, where only the presence of one's comrades really counts. And thus it is comrades that soldiers fight and die for. Sassoon's words lead us into another important aspect of comradeship—the role of the leader. As Sassoon's Lieutenant Sherston points out, the junior leader needs to share the communion of his fellows—"winning the respect, or even the affection, of platoon and company"—as much as any other soldier. But the junior leader is not any other soldier; he is a leader. Thus, at the same time that he needs the security and support of his fellow soldiers, he must also lead them into battle and, often, to their deaths. Needless to say, soldiers are not naturally inclined to so follow. They must feel the same sense of comradeship toward their junior leader as they do among themselves before they will risk their lives for him.

Volumes have been written about leadership—principles, traits, tips, do's, don't's, examples, etc. While there are many useful tidbits in these volumes, for the junior leader at the front only two things really matter, and the literature of war is loud and clear on this: the leader must be tactically competent and must genuinely care for his men. Everything else is peripheral.

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***"We fought for reasons . . . stronger than doctrine. We fought for ourselves, so that we wouldn't die in holes filled with mud and snow."***

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Obviously a leader must be tactically proficient, because the soldier does not want to be killed thanks to his leader's incompetence. If the leader does not know his job, or if he is not able to quickly assimilate what he needs to know on the battlefield, then he will not gain his men's respect, he will not bond with his comrades, and his men will not risk their lives for him. As exemplified by Sassoon's Lieutenant Colonel Kinjack, the leader doesn't have to be a nice guy—he just has to know his stuff: "Personal charm was not his strong point, and he made no pretension to it. He was aggressive and blatant, but he knew his job, and for that we respected him and were grateful."

The second leadership requisite—genuine concern for the men—deserves even closer examination. Genuine concern means far more than just taking care of the troops. It is a deep, internalized, and completely authentic love of the soldier for what he is and what he does. In war, this love cannot be faked—the soldiers will know if their leader's concern is real or pretended. They will not readily follow a leader into battle who does not truly care for them, as proven by his presence and his deeds.

The authors quoted throughout do not dwell on the characteristics of leadership—that is not their main theme—but the need for leaders to care about their soldiers comes out very clearly. Sassoon's newly arrived Lieutenant Sherston emulates fellow platoon leader Durley who "took the men's discomforts very much to heart. Simple and unassertive . . . Durley was an inspiration toward selfless patience." Other examples abound. Sajer's company commander, Captain Wesreidau, "often helped us to endure the worst. . . . He stood beside us during countless gray watches, and came to our bunkers to talk with us, and make us forget the howling storm outside." The veteran soldier in Sajer's platoon, "who had a good sense of men," said of Wesreidau that "he looks intelligent and wise." Lieutenant Guy Chapman's battalion executive officer, Major Ardaugh, was from the same mold: "Very small, very thin, a frail ghost of a man he joined us; but a month of his company convinced everyone of the soundness of his heart. He was always to be found in the front line at night, sitting on a firestep smoking his pipe or wandering around the bays. "

There is a key phrase in this description of Major Ardaugh: "the soundness of his heart." The leader who truly cares for his soldiers is with them because of heartfelt concern, not because it is his "duty," or because he wants to appear brave and soldierly for his own sake. He is there because he wants to be. This concern cannot be trumped-up or invented, it must come from inner feelings like those of James McDonough on the verge of leading one of his squads in a bloody counterattack: "I felt proud to be with them and glad to share their company. Their qualities of moral and physical courage, of unselfish dedication to each other amid the difficult jobs they were called upon to do, marked them in my mind as among the noblest of human beings." Lieutenant Chapman's tribute to his men is in a similar vein: "By your courage



in tribulation, by your cheerfulness before the dirty devices of this world, you have won the love of those who have watched you. All we remember is your living face, and that we loved you for being of our clay and our spirit." Lieutenant Sherston's tribute to his soldiers is cut from identical cloth:

I was rewarded by an intense memory of men whose courage had shown me the power of the human spirit—that spirit which could withstand the utmost assault. Such men had inspired me to be at my best when things were very bad, and they outweighed all failures. Against the background of the War and its brutal stupidity those men had stood glorified by the thing which sought to destroy them.

There is a corollary to the rule of caring about one's soldiers. It is contained in these simple yet significant words of Guy Chapman in describing certain of his brigade's staff officers: "They were of that superb type, the best kind of regimental officers, devoid of personal ambition." The corollary, quite simply, is that the officer who *truly* cares for his men has little time or inclination for personal ambition. The junior leader who is more concerned about his career than his own men will not be willingly followed in battle, for such a leader does not have the soldiers' best interests at heart.

Thus the leader, through tactical competence and genuine concern for his soldiers, will earn their trust and comradeship. Soldiers and leaders alike need their comrades' support to endure war's fears and horrors. Comradeship sustains the soldier long after the glorious ideals for which he initially went to war are lost in grim reality. Paradoxically, comradeship becomes so important, so much the be-all of the soldier's existence, that he will die for his comrades at the same time that he counts on them for his own survival.

### ***Killer Angels***

Once Chamberlain had a speech memorized from Shakespeare and gave it proudly, [his father] listening but not looking, and Chamberlain remembered it still: "What a piece of work is man . . . in action how like an angel." And the old man, grinning, had scratched his head and then said stiffly, "Well, boy, if he's an angel, he's sure a murderin' angel." And Chamberlain had gone to school to make an oration on the subject: Man, the Killer Angel.

— Michael Shaara  
*The Killer Angels*

We turn now to the third theme in the literature of war, one more pervasive than a supposedly peace-loving mankind might wish to admit: In war many soldiers become efficient killers who take to their work rather handily.

Michael Shaara's excellent, fictionalized account of the Civil War battle of Gettysburg is arguably the book most widely read by serving soldiers and most often quoted by them. *The Killer Angels* abounds with lessons in



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**Colonel Joshua Chamberlain gives the order at Little Round Top for a desperate charge in this painting "Bayonet! Forward . . ." by Dale Gallon. The original painting was a gift to the US Army War College from the resident class of 1987.**

leadership and generalship, and it is for this reason, along with its readability, that the book is so popular. Most military readers, however, do not catch the book's main theme—the theme for which it is titled—that some men in battle, as personified by Colonel Chamberlain of the 20th Maine, are quite adept at the calling of war. Following the 20th Maine's critical victory on Little Round Top, Shaara describes killer-angel Chamberlain's feelings before the smoke had even cleared: "He felt an appalling thrill. They would fight again, and when [the enemy] came he would be behind another stone wall waiting for them, and he would stay there until he died or until it ended, and he was looking forward to it with an incredible eagerness. . . . He shook his head, amazed at himself."

One might dismiss this as merely clever wordsmithing—surely no soldier eagerly seeks his next battle. But in examining the career of Colonel (later Brigadier General) Joshua Chamberlain, one must conclude that Shaara has hit the nail on the head. A reading of John J. Pullen's excellent *The 20th Maine: A Volunteer Regiment in the Civil War*, in essence the story of Chamberlain as well, shows what a truly remarkable warrior he was. He had numerous horses shot out from under him, was severely wounded several times, and won the Medal of Honor. In short, he was always in the thick of it.

His brigade was chosen as the honor guard to receive the surrender of Lee's army at Appomattox, and he stood beside the President of the United States at the Union Grand Review at the end of the war. That event is the capstone in Pullen's summation of Chamberlain's soldierly career: "It was an honor for which the Maine general had been an extremely unlikely candidate three years before as a theologian and a college professor. But there is no telling what sort of man will do well in battle. The war had been Chamberlain's dish; he had swallowed it whole and savored it to the full."

Even accepting that Chamberlain did indeed have a killer-angel complex, one might be tempted to write him off as an aberration, unrepresentative of any characteristics commonly seen in soldiers. The literature of war, however, suggests that Chamberlain's behavior is more common than one might like to believe. Furthermore, the killer angel is no psychopathic killer in uniform, though the literature suggests that there are a few of those around too, like Norman Mailer's Sergeant Croft as portrayed in *The Naked and the Dead*. The killer angel more often is like Chamberlain—rational, intelligent, and sensitive, and fully able to return successfully to the peacetime life, albeit often much affected by his wartime experiences. As J. Glenn Gray points out in *The Warriors* (a book all serving soldiers would do well to read), the soldier-killer may be lurking in all of us:

Most men would never admit that they enjoy killing, and there are a great many who do not. On the other hand, thousands of youths who never suspected the presence of such an impulse in themselves have learned in military life the mad excitement of destroying. . . . Generals often name it "the will to close with the enemy." This innocent-sounding phrase conceals the very substance of the delight in destruction slumbering in most of us.

No doubt to the despair of well-meaning pacifists and humanists, man does possess a vast capacity for destruction and violence. Most of the accounts cited describe soldiers who are particularly adept at war and who draw a qualified pleasure from their accomplishments. To understand these seemingly sinister killer angels, we must first understand the environment of war in which they operate. At the front the number one rule is kill or be killed. Further, the soldier's right to kill is legally established by his government, leaving only his ingrained aversion to killing to be overcome. Thus a stage is set bearing little resemblance to peacetime. Frederick Downs describes how he and his platoon "slide into the barbarism" of war: "Why did we want to kill dinks? After all, we have been mostly law-abiding citizens back in the world and we were taught that to take another man's life was wrong. Somehow the perspective got twisted in war. . . . It turned out that most of us like to kill men. Some guys would shoot at a dink much as they would at a target."

The soldier is there to kill, and if he does not, he will be killed in turn. This basic rule allows soldiers not only to rationalize the taking of life, but also to take satisfaction in destroying the enemy. James McDonough, for example, expressed a perverse pleasure in seeing slain enemy: "Looking at enemy dead is an eerie sensation. I had done it often, but the emotions it evoked in me were disturbing. Could it be—repugnant thought that it was—pleasure that one feels at the sight of an opponent's body?" As McDonough goes on to explain, emotions in war run strong and deep, and the driving rule affecting the flow of emotion is that of kill or be killed: "Emotions flow with an intensity unimaginable to the nonparticipant: fear, hate, passion, desperation. And then—triumph! The enemy falls, lies there lifeless, his gaping corpse a mockery to the valiant fight he made. Your own emotions withdraw, replaced by a flow of relief and exhilaration, because he is dead and not you."

The environment of war causes not only strong emotions, but also painfully conflicting ones. As we have seen, the successful leader must genuinely care for his men. At the same time, however, he must somehow steel himself against the inevitable deaths that will occur among them. No easy task. At one point, as he led his company into battle yet again, Audie Murphy presented what appears, on the surface, to be a very callous attitude: "Right now I am concerned with the individual only as a fighting unit. If his feet freeze, I will turn him over to the medics. If his nerves crack, I will send him to the rear. If he is hit, I will see that his wound is treated. Otherwise, I look upon him as a unit whom I must get to the front and in battle position on schedule." We know, of course, from other parts of Murphy's memoirs, that he cared very much about his soldiers, but the leader must somehow reconcile himself to the fact that some will not survive. The leader who cannot do this will himself crack. Such is the environment of war for the leader.

There is the further consideration that, for some younger soldiers, the environment of war is the only one they have known outside of home and classroom. Thus, with no peacetime adult life of consequence to relate to, war becomes their entire existence. Guy Sajer, who joined the German army at 16, explained: "And then there was the war, and I married it because there was nothing else when I reached the age of falling in love." Likewise, Remarque's Paul Baumer, who went to war at 18, cannot envision life after the war, and is pessimistic about his ability to function in peacetime. All he and his young comrades know is war: "We had as yet taken no root. The war swept us away. For the others, the older men, it is but an interruption. They are able to think beyond it. We, however, have been gripped by it and do not know what the end may be." Such is the life of war for the innocent youth.

The wartime environment is one in which the killer angel will not only thrive, but also prove to be a valuable asset to his comrades and his country. In every war, on every side, such soldiers emerge, and the literature

of war is rife with examples. In Hemingway's novel *Across the River and Into the Trees* we have a classic study of one such killer angel, Colonel Richard Cantwell, a life-long professional soldier who has fought in both world wars, has received numerous wounds, admits to killing 122 enemy (he has counted), and yet can never reconcile his ability to both love and hate war.

Lieutenant Guy Chapman's company commander, who later becomes battalion commander, is a classic example of a man "awakened" by war: "Sane, cool, and monosyllabic, he would when the occasion demanded take enormous risks and, with an uncanny sensibility, carry them off. He was one of those rare individuals who seem to require the stimulus of danger to raise them to the highest pitch." Chapman, after long months of watching his commander excel at his business, comes to believe that Colonel Smith truly "enjoyed the war, even in its most terrifying aspects. The worse the trial to be faced, the more perfect the balance of his nervous system and the greater the increase of his physical and moral power." As Chapman further considered men's actions and emotions in war, he came to realize that there is a bit of the killer angel in many soldiers, even in those who hate war:

There grew a compelling fascination. I do not think I exaggerate: for in that fascination lies War's power. Once you have lain in her arms you can admit no other mistress. You may loathe, you may execrate, but you cannot deny her. . . . Every writer of imagination who has set down in honesty his experience has confessed it. Even those who hate her most are prisoners to her spell.

The susceptibility to war's fascination is a matter of human nature, not a matter of rank or background. Some of the private soldiers who rotated into Audie Murphy's and Ross Carter's platoons adapted quickly to their role as killer soldiers. A fellow soldier of Carter's, a "calm, quiet, good-natured" soldier fond of reading Homer, "turned out to be one of the fiercest, craftiest fighters. . . . It surprised us but shouldn't have. It is hard to predict the fighting cock in the chick and the true soldier before he has been in battle." Audie Murphy tells of similar arrivals to his platoon. One replacement, named Flack, "came into the lines with eagerness. A pale boy who looks as though he scarcely had strength to lift a rifle, he has volunteered regularly for patrols. He works with a quiet thoroughness." Likewise, Valero, a tough kid from the streets of Chicago, "is a born fighter. . . . He asks no quarter, gives no quarter; and his face lights up with savage joy when his gun is spitting. But with the men he is as friendly as a shaggy dog."

Obviously the backgrounds of killer angels can vary considerably, yet within each are dormant emotions that war brings to the surface. The more introspective killer angels realize, as does Arnold Zweig's Lieutenant Kroysing, that their zest for war fulfills some sort of personal need, and is not based on patriotic zeal: "More than any man Eberhard Kroysing had needed the war

to realize himself, to express his being and to test his reach, as he himself put it." This need of Kroysing's does not go away. Even after he is seriously wounded as an engineer in the line, he plans to continue the war as a fighter pilot, although his wounds are grave enough to warrant a return to civilian life. He describes his plans to the chaplain while in the hospital, explaining that, in making this decision, "he was not talking of his duty . . . he was talking of his own satisfaction. The priest knew quite well what a heathen he was—a faithful disciple in the religion of slaughter."

Despite the overwhelming evidence in the literature of war, it is difficult to believe, at least in a peacetime setting, that such lust for war is possible. Only by considering the killer angel in the context of his environment does one begin to understand that such soldiers not only exist but thrive. Taken to extremes, the killer angel and his comrades, operating in the violent ambience of war, work up a communal rage against the enemy that temporarily drives away fear and incites them to heights of destruction. Gray describes this phenomenon: "Men who have lived in the zone of combat long enough to be veterans are sometimes possessed by a fury that makes them capable of anything. Blinded by rage to destroy and supremely careless of consequences, they storm against the enemy until they are either victorious, dead, or utterly exhausted." The important factor here is living in the zone of combat "long enough to be veterans." Such soldiers may literally assimilate the environment of war.

### ***Conclusion***

If I were in charge of training combat officers, I would start by establishing a class called "The Dark Side of Command." It would be about the basic features of combat: killing the enemy and taking ground. This is a side of command that is rarely discussed within the military. It's hard to talk about because it invokes subjects that are taboo in our society—subjects like death, fear, ego, destruction, and mental illness.

— Frederick Downs

"Death and the Dark Side of Command"

There is much need for the sort of training described by Downs, as unpleasant as the subject matter may be, for the junior leader in combat will most assuredly have to deal with "subjects like death, fear, ego, destruction, and mental illness." In his article, Downs accuses the military of glossing over these subjects. There is much truth in this accusation. The Army has made only sporadic efforts to address these complex and profoundly sensitive issues. A slight flurry of activity in the early 1980s, for instance, resulted in the publication of field manuals covering the effects of "stress" (a euphemism for fear) on soldiers in combat (FM 26-2) and the effects of exhaustion and

the consequent need for proper planning in continuous operations (FM 22-9). But these were flashes in the pan, not wholly satisfying, and certainly not comprehensive. Even today's hype about the warrior spirit rings hollow because it glorifies positive leadership traits and largely ignores how the combat leader is to deal with fear, death, self-inflicted wounds, fratricide, and combat fatigue—skills as much a part of the “warrior spirit” as tactical proficiency, stamina, and fostering unit cohesion. It's a package deal.

Until such time as Downs' class on “The Dark Side of Command” is instituted, both the soldier and the leader can learn much about these taboo subjects from the literature of war. As a generation of soldiers, myself included, approaches 20 years service without hearing a shot fired in anger, the lessons gleaned from the literature of war may be the best we have to go on, as was the case for a young Henry Gole off to his first war in Korea. Far from recoiling at the horrors to be found in war's literature, the professional soldier will see his capacity for introspection grow—a capacity he will surely need if he is to reconcile human reactions to war with his mandate to achieve victory.

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# Logistics in Grenada: Supporting No-Plan Wars

GILBERT S. HARPER

**T**his article analyzes the logistics of Operation Urgent Fury, the 1983 American-led military intervention in Grenada.<sup>1</sup> The article is not written for logisticians but for senior national security leaders such as the warfighting commanders-in-chief. These are the personnel who will make the essential multidimensional logistic decisions, either by design or omission.

Logistics is as essential to the successful accomplishment of no-plan low-intensity conflicts as it is to any other military operation. "No-plan" operations are those in which a contingency plan may not exist or where the exigency of the situation, coupled with a requirement for stringent operational security and a prompt response, precludes actions to refine general war plans into detailed operations orders. The quick response may be necessary to meet operational needs as well as to appease domestic political pressures. Graham Allison is unfortunately correct in his observation that "the American public will accept big, fast, and inefficient operations such as the Mayaguez Raid as long as they are successful, but the small, slow, and efficient operations will try the American patience."<sup>2</sup>

No-plan operations such as Urgent Fury should not be confused with elaborately pre-orchestrated interventions such as Operation Just Cause, the US decapitation operation against Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega in December of last year. In this latter case, we had the luxury of detailed advance planning and preparation. We had a sizable contingent of SOUTH-COM forces already in place in the target area, forces with long-established lines of supply. We had reinforced the local US forces with Stateside units several months before the event, and provided for their logistical needs. In Grenada, however, we started virtually from scratch.

The high probability of US involvement in future operations like Urgent Fury is well accepted.<sup>3</sup> While the majority of the world has been at



peace since World War II, violence has been the norm in the Third World, where more than 30 conventional and 60 unconventional conflicts have flared and ebbed over the past 40 years, at an estimated cost of 16 million lives.<sup>4</sup> The recent history of Great Britain's involvement in the Falklands or US actions in Lebanon, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and the Persian Gulf foreshadow US involvement in future low-intensity challenges in the Third World. (I will use the sanctioned term "low-intensity conflict," though I prefer retired General Fred F. Woerner's alternative "high-probability conflict.")

In Operation Urgent Fury, US forces successfully overcame tremendous operational and logistic challenges. Urgent Fury, however, illustrates a best-case rather than a worst-case example. Grenada is relatively close to the United States. There were no significant enemy air or sea forces, and enemy ground forces were not well-trained regulars. The population was friendly and the environment forgiving. Even so, US forces struggled to provide adequate logistic support, and in many instances inadequate logistic preparation was overcome only by extraordinary efforts of American soldiers.

Our armed forces demonstrated the capability of deploying, fighting, and winning on short notice, but whether we are capable of repeating this success in a future no-plan operation under less favorable conditions is dubious. The lessons of Grenada suggest we are not thus capable, and that our warfighting commanders underestimated the critical importance of logistics in planning and conducting the operation.

### ***Strategic Importance***

Grenada is the smallest independent territory in the Western Hemisphere, with a population of only 112,000; yet its location at the southern tip of the Leeward-Windward island chain curving down from Puerto Rico toward Venezuela is of critical strategic significance to the United States. On 13 March 1979 the New Jewell Movement led by Maurice Bishop seized control of the government of Grenada. Within three weeks the 1974 constitution had been suspended and arms and ammunition were being received from Cuba.<sup>5</sup>

Cuba also agreed to underwrite almost 40 percent of a \$71 million project to construct a 9700-foot airport runway at Point Salines. The reported purpose of the airport was to revitalize tourism.<sup>6</sup> However, it was the airport's

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ability to accommodate military transports and fighter aircraft that concerned US strategists. An air base in an unfriendly Grenada would constitute a threat to vital sea lines of communication through the Gulf of Mexico and could be used as a way station to support Marxist insurgencies and Cuban forces in Latin America and Africa. General William H. Nutting, former Commander of US Southern Command, summarized these concerns as follows:

When MIGs can operate out of Grenada and Nicaragua as well as Cuba, it will enable someone to cover most of the oil production facilities in the Caribbean, all oil refineries there, plus the sea-lanes through which crude moves to the US and through the Panama Canal. That is a major potential threat to the US.<sup>7</sup>

Despite US concerns, Mr. Bishop continued to improve relations with both Cuba and the Soviet Union. In 1980 he signed a mutual assistance agreement with the Soviets, granting them landing rights for long-range reconnaissance aircraft. Grenadans also participated in combat operations in Nicaragua.<sup>8</sup> In April 1982 President Reagan, while visiting Barbados, said that Grenada had joined the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Nicaragua in attempting to spread Marxist doctrine throughout the region.<sup>9</sup>

By the summer of 1983 Bishop began to lose control of the government. On 25 September he agreed to share power with Bernard Coard, but on 13 October, Bishop was placed under house arrest.<sup>10</sup> He was executed on 19 October. A 24-hour curfew was imposed, entrapping approximately 1000 US citizens. A military council headed by General Hudson Austin assumed control of the government.<sup>11</sup> In response to the situation, on 23 October, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States formally requested US assistance in a combined effort to restore order and democracy in Grenada.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Planning***

Urgent Fury was unquestionably a no-plan operation. The staffs of the deploying units had insufficient time to adequately plan and coordinate their efforts. Additionally, the course of action approved for the operation did not resemble any of the concept plans then in existence, even though the concept plan exercised during Joint Exercise Solid Shield 83 was viable.<sup>13</sup>

The ad hoc plan was flawed; participants would not fight as they had trained. Caribbean Command in Key West, Florida, was not included in the operational chain of command, ostensibly because it was not prepared to handle the mission. Caribbean Command's primary area of responsibility was the Caribbean Basin; as recently as May 1983 the command had successfully led joint operations in Exercise Universal Trek on the island of Vieques.<sup>14</sup>

The XVIII Airborne Command headquarters with its Corps Support Command (COSCOM) was also excluded from the operation, thus severing the

habitual relationship between the COSCOM and the 82d Airborne Division's Division Support Command (DISCOM). The Division Support Command would have to shoulder complete responsibility for loading and sustaining the deploying force, although the impact of this violation of doctrine was somewhat alleviated by the initiative and unselfish support shown by the Corps Headquarters and the COSCOM on an "out-of-channel" basis. In the aftermath of Operation Urgent Fury, the XVIII Airborne Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Jack Mackmull, observed:

Every time we violate doctrine, we find ourselves in difficulty. Leaders generally rise to the occasion, overcome the results of not following doctrine, and by their performance get the job done. However, we should not purposely handicap leaders by willfully neglecting doctrine.<sup>15</sup>

Strict operational security limited the number of people involved in the planning, and logisticians were among those excluded. Incredibly, the acting J-4 of the Organization of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Major General Click Smith, did not become aware of the operation until Monday morning, 24 October, less than 24 hours prior to execution, when he was first asked for a logistic assessment.<sup>16</sup>

On 18 October 1983, the day before Bishop's assassination, then-Vice President Bush convened a special situation meeting in the White House,<sup>17</sup> and General John W. Vessey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, issued a warning order to Admiral Wesley McDonald, Commander in Chief, Atlantic Command, to prepare a military operation to evacuate American students and designated foreign nationals from Grenada.<sup>18</sup> On 21 October, a naval task force with a Marine contingent en route to Lebanon from the Caribbean was diverted and ordered to turn south.<sup>19</sup> Admiral McDonald's military mission was expanded to include combat operations and peacekeeping duties.<sup>20</sup> These tasks exceeded the capabilities of the available Marines; it would take at least eight days to alert and deploy sufficient additional Marines to accomplish the mission. As a result the operation was expanded to include Army forces and the Air Force.

The first planning session was held at Atlantic Command headquarters on Saturday morning, 22 October. According to one attendee, no joint logistic planning took place.<sup>21</sup> On 23 October the President approved the Atlantic Command plan and gave full authority to General Vessey to implement it.<sup>22</sup> Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf III, Commander of the US Navy's Second Fleet, was designated Commander, Joint Task Force 120, which would execute the operation. The Navy, Marine, and Ranger task groupings were officially activated and the 82d Airborne Division was officially alerted at 2100 hours on 24 October.

On Monday 24 October a final planning meeting was held at Atlantic Command. Again, there was no substantial joint logistic planning.<sup>23</sup> At the request of General Cavazos, Commander of US Army Forces Command,

Major General Norman H. Schwarzkopf, Commanding General of the 24th Infantry Division, and two assistants attended the meeting to assist Vice Admiral Metcalf. As a commander of a joint task force, Vice Admiral Metcalf was authorized additional staff augmentees from the other services. As a Navy Fleet Commander, his staff did not have a logistic planner as would normally exist in an Army or an Air Force staff. Despite these facts, he disregarded doctrine and did not augment his staff since in his opinion each service would be supporting its own forces.<sup>24</sup> As a result, he was not able to institute measures that would optimize the logistic efficiency of the joint operation or gain the advantage of interservice support.

There was no joint logistics plan that coordinated and gave priority to logistic efforts on a joint level. This omission did not pose a major problem for the Navy component or the Marines, who had already been provisioned for their transit to Lebanon. The Air Force component was also not seriously affected, since it operated from fixed bases outside Grenada. In contrast, the Army component, specifically the 82d Airborne Division, faced some unprecedented logistic demands.

### ***Mission and Concept of the Operation***

After various evolutions, the mission was as follows: conduct military operations to protect and evacuate US citizens and designated foreign nationals; neutralize Grenadan forces; stabilize the internal situation; and maintain the peace.<sup>25</sup> An additional requirement was that the mission be accomplished quickly while minimizing US and foreign national casualties and destruction of property. In other words, this was to be an operation the American public would accept—big, fast, and inefficient.

Vice Admiral Metcalf would command the operation from the USS *Guam*. Contrary to doctrine, there would be no unified ground force commander once the Marines and Army forces were established ashore; the component forces would continue to report directly to Metcalf. Logistically, this resulted in duplication of effort and lack of mutual support. For example, the Army asked the departing Marines to transfer common items of supplies. From the Army viewpoint it would be more economical for the Marines to be resupplied enroute to Lebanon than for the Army to fly similar items to Grenada. The Marines refused to transfer the supplies, however, until they received written confirmation through command channels that they would be reimbursed. Rather than fight the bureaucracy, the Army dropped the issue. Transferring the supplies may or may not have been the best course, but without someone to analyze the issue from a joint perspective, the decision was made for the wrong reasons. It is interesting to note that there was no problem with the Rangers transferring supplies to the 82d Airborne Division because no service boundaries had to be crossed.<sup>26</sup>

In both Lebanon and the Dominican Republic, a ground commander was designated with positive results. The greatest contribution of this commander was not in directing tactical operations, but in coordinating logistic operations. If the Joint Task Force staff is not able to perform this function, then a ground force commander must be designated and properly staffed to effect interservice coordination.

### ***Intelligence***

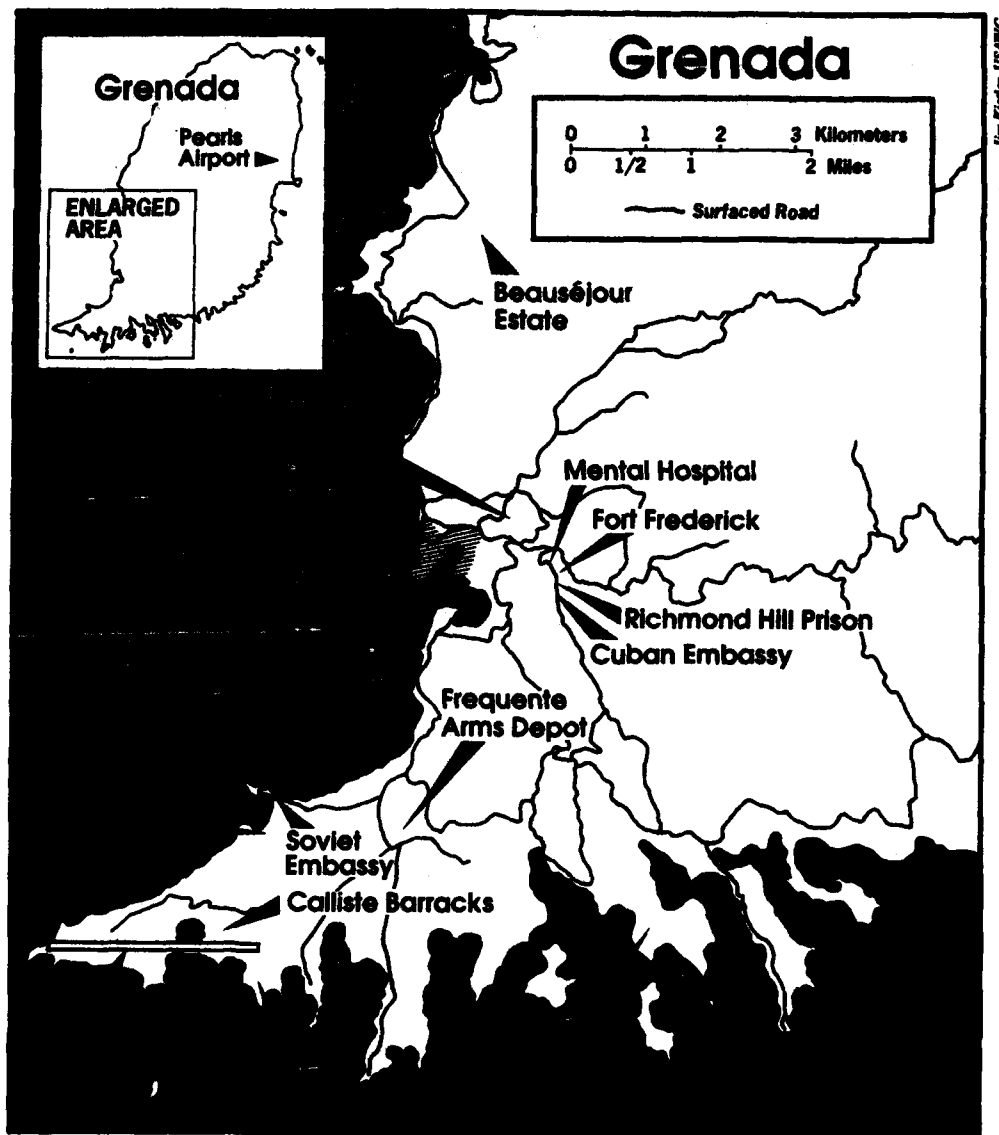
Grenada should not have surprised military planners. In addition to his public remarks in 1982, President Reagan attacked the construction of the Point Salines Airfield in a nationally televised speech in March 1983, just seven months before the intervention.<sup>27</sup> In spite of this signal, Operation Urgent Fury was launched with little accurate information about conditions on the island.

Logistic intelligence was not sought, such as the capacity of the airfields, the road networks, the local sources of supply and services, the sources of potable water, and the specific health conditions. Since standard military maps were not available, several other kinds of maps, including a reprinted tourist map of Grenada with a makeshift military grid overlay, were issued.<sup>28</sup> As a result, the area selected as the airdrop assembly area turned out to be a lake.<sup>29</sup> A US-owned petroleum firm with substantial fuel reserves was not used until several days after combat operations ended. In the interim, the 82d Airborne Division used critical airlift resources to refuel the force.<sup>30</sup>

Such deficiencies could have been avoided if the intelligence community had been required early on to provide essential logistic intelligence. In his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Vice Admiral Metcalf lamented the absence of human intelligence, which he attributed to a lack of time.<sup>31</sup> However, the absence of human intelligence would not have stymied logisticians if there had been a database with logistic information on the area. Commercial data bases existed, but there was no system that could gain easy access to them under the tight operational security in which the operation was planned.

### ***Execution***

On 24 October 1983 at 2100 hours, the 82d Airborne Division was placed on full alert. Initial guidance to Major General Edward L. Trobaugh was to deploy two infantry battalions with a command and control element. These units were tasked to depart from Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, 12 hours after notification as opposed to the Division's normal deployment scenario of 18 hours' notice for the departure of one battalion to be followed by a second battalion six hours later. As we have seen, the DISCOM rather than the COSCOM was operating the issue points at the airfield load-out site, Green



Ramp. Logistics was the worst bottleneck; indeed the scene has been characterized as controlled chaos.<sup>32</sup>

Major General Trobaugh directed that the deploying force be prepared to airdrop rather than airland, since the Rangers had not yet secured the airfield. Parachutes were then issued and various items of equipment were rigged for airdrop. The need to tailor the force to meet mission requirements further taxed the ability of the Division to prepare automated load plans for the deployment.<sup>33</sup> Much to its credit, the Division met the 12-hour deadline. The force was prepared to fight, but could not sustain itself for more than one

to two days. For example, the only potable water thought to be available was that carried by the soldiers.

At approximately 0500 hours, 25 October 1983, Marine helicopters began landing at Pearls Airport on the northern portion of the island and near the town of Grenville just south of Pearls. Both groups encountered little resistance and secured their objectives by 0800.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile Army Rangers began their airborne assault of Point Salines Airfield at 0537. With assistance from Air Force AC-130 gunships, the Rangers overcame resistance much stiffer than expected, and by 0850 had secured the airfield and the True Blue Campus of the Medical School, where they rescued 130 students. (Actual air evacuation of the students did not commence until 26 October.)<sup>35</sup> At 1400 hours, lead elements of the 82d Airborne began landing at Point Salines. As these units expanded the air head, they also encountered stiff resistance, and approximately five hours of fighting ensued.<sup>36</sup>

The Forward Area Support Team (FAST) that deployed with the infantry battalions consisted of an airfield control group, a maintenance detachment, and a refueling crew. They brought in only four vehicles and one forklift. Normally the FAST would have included major elements of a maintenance company, a medical company, and a supply and services company. Due to tactical considerations, however, only 35 people were expected to support the force until follow-on support forces could be deployed.

The FAST's area of operation was restricted to the immediate confines of the Salines airfield. From this base, the FAST was expected to support the force with all classes of supply except medical. Resupply was to be handled on a preplanned basis whereby logisticians at Fort Bragg would project the quantity and type of supplies needed and fly them to the island. (An intermediate support base was also established in Barbados, where supplies could be funneled and later shuttled to Grenada as the need arose.)

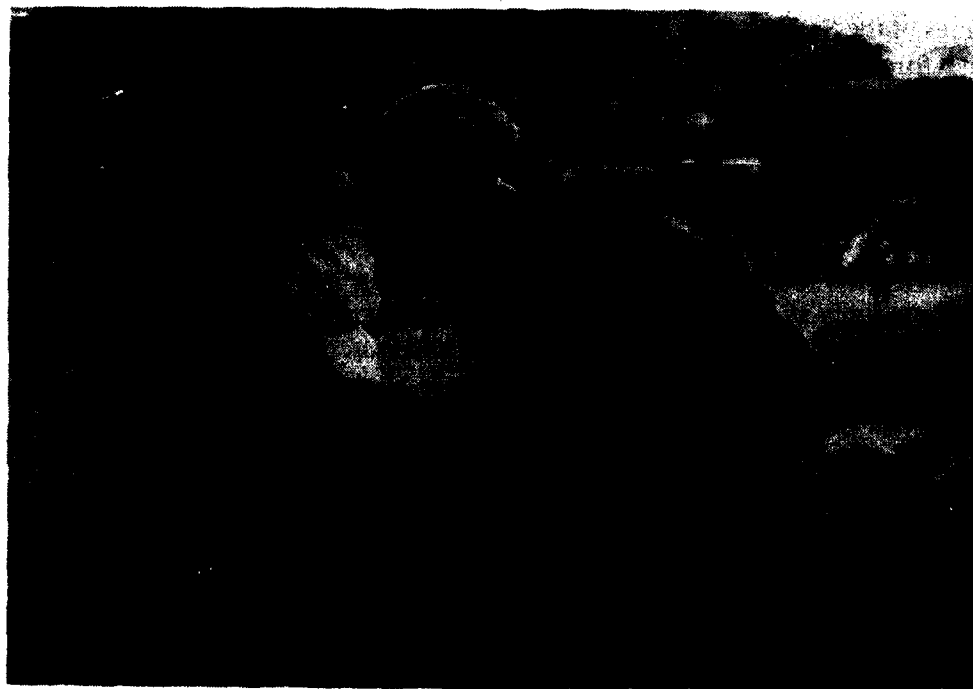
That evening, the Marines in the north brought ashore 13 amphibious vehicles and five tanks.<sup>37</sup> Army units brought no combat vehicles whatever.<sup>38</sup> The students at True Blue Campus set up a makeshift field hospital to help treat casualties and also shared their food and water with the soldiers. Meanwhile, Navy SEALs had secured Governor General Sir Paul Scoon in his residence, but were surrounded and unable to evacuate him.<sup>39</sup>

Early on the 26th the Marines conducted an amphibious assault near the capital of St. Georges and, with the SEALs, evacuated the Governor General. This action was followed by a Ranger assault in Marine helicopters to rescue 426 students at the Grand Anse Campus of the Medical School. By the end of the day, most students had been rescued, and the Marines had captured Fort Frederick, a major command and control center.<sup>40</sup>

Combat operations were basically concluded on the 27th, when the Marines succeeded in capturing Richmond Hill Prison, and Army elements

captured Calvigny Military Barracks. On the 28th the Rangers began redeployment, and the 82d linked up with the Marines to secure the capital of St. Georges.<sup>41</sup> The next few days consisted of eliminating isolated pockets of resistance, conducting reconnaissance operations, providing security for the citizens, and reestablishing a democratic government. The Marines reembarked on 2 November. All military objectives had been accomplished and hostilities were declared ended.<sup>42</sup>

At the onset of the deployment, Brigadier General J. D. Smith, the Assistant Division Commander for Support of the 82d Airborne, was the single point of contact for establishing priorities on incoming air transports supporting the Division. He had secure communication with Major General Trobaugh through a tactical satellite hookup, but was not initially aware that the Point Salines Airfield had room for only one aircraft on the ground. Aircraft were pushed out from airfields in the United States, but were unable to land in Grenada due to limited space at the airfield and insufficient materiel handling equipment which delayed off-loading.<sup>43</sup> When the decision was made to deploy six more infantry battalions, resupply of the deployed force was put on hold. Air loads had to be reconfigured; in the process, the DISCOM lost control of some of the supplies on the ground at Green Ramp. As a result, the DISCOM Movements Control Center could no longer account for the whereabouts of all air loads nor the supplies that had been forwarded.<sup>44</sup>



An American soldier tends to one of the smaller casualties encountered on Grenada.



Additionally, each service requested strategic airlift directly from the Military Airlift Command. Since the Atlantic Command J-4 had been circumvented, no one had control over the airflow. Aircraft from both DOD and non-DOD agencies departed from several different Stateside airfields (Pope AFB, North Carolina; Norfolk, Virginia; McGuire AFB, New Jersey; and others), but landing in Grenada was first-come, first-served. The FAST did not know what cargo was on incoming aircraft; as a result, flights with staff officers from Atlantic Command headquarters were accorded the same priority as logistic aircraft carrying essential supplies. Aircraft with insufficient fuel to stay in the queue had to be diverted to the intermediate support base at Barbados or to other airfields. Dwindling fuel aboard the aircraft, not the criticality of the cargo, dictated these decisions.

The airlift problem was compounded as jet fuel reserves at Seawall International Airport in Barbados were depleted. The Air Force elected to reduce the maximum allowable load from 50,000 to 35,000 pounds so aircraft could fly round-trip from Fort Bragg to Point Salines and not need to refuel at Seawall. The Army was apparently unaware of this decision.

Non-divisional units faced an almost impossible task in attempting to get into the airflow. For example, the COSCOM's graves registration team cooled its heels at Green Ramp for 48 hours after it had been called forward, while the 5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital was alerted on 25 October but spent five days waiting to deploy.<sup>45</sup>

Such confusion could have been reduced had existing logistic doctrine been followed. All requirements for airlift should have been forwarded to the Atlantic Command J-4. There the requests would have been reviewed and validated before being forwarded to the Military Airlift Command. Additionally all outbound flights to Grenada should have been scheduled and coordinated through the J-4, including those involving non-DOD personnel. Less critical flights could have been scheduled into Barbados to further reduce the congestion.

Interoperability problems became apparent in trying to coordinate medical evacuation between the Army forces ashore and Navy vessels. The FAST had trouble communicating medical evacuation requests to the USS *Guam*. Army helicopters were initially denied permission to land on Navy vessels because the pilots were considered unqualified for ship landings.<sup>46</sup> Army helicopters were also unable to refuel aboard the USS *Guam* because the fuel nozzles on the vessel were not compatible with Army aircraft.<sup>47</sup> These problems were eventually resolved, and fortunately no American soldiers died because of improper medical care.

Until COSCOM logistic assets could be deployed, the DISCOM could focus on providing only the basics: ammunition, fuel, food, and water. Ammunition resupply proved to be only a minor problem. Through a combination of the

units' basic loads and preplanned resupply packages from Fort Bragg, the 82d Airborne Division never experienced a significant ammunition shortage.<sup>48</sup>

Fuel presented a more formidable challenge. The Division deployed few vehicles, but managed to commandeer large quantities of Eastern bloc vehicles that had been abandoned on the island. These assets were sustained from on-board gasoline-filled bladders in C-141s until local sources of fuel were found. Aviation fuel for Army helicopters also had to be delivered by air until the service interoperability problems were resolved.<sup>49</sup> The FAST was equipped to download the bladder birds into 500-gallon collapsible fuel tanks on the ground; thus fuel was made available, but not without initial difficulty.<sup>50</sup>

In the succinct words of J. D. Smith, the 82d Division's Assistant Commander for Support, "Water is a war-stopper."<sup>51</sup> The Division had deployed to Grenada with the notion that quality rather than quantity of potable water would be its biggest challenge. Once again, logistic intelligence proved to be inaccurate. As inhabitants of a tropical island, the Grenadans relied extensively on cisterns for collecting rain water. The majority of the available cisterns were low on fresh water, and the water system in St. Georges was rendered inoperable early in the fighting.

The Division issued additional water to individual soldiers, but it did not deploy any additional assets that could have alleviated a water shortage. For the first three days, water was resupplied by air in five-gallon cans and augmented by whatever local sources could be exploited. Subsequently, the division received four water purification units, which provided a capability to desalinize sea water.<sup>52</sup>

Food for the Division consisted primarily of Meals Ready to Eat (MREs). These rations were augmented by fresh fruits and vegetables from the local economy. However, an urgent requirement for the resupply of rations occurred when the Division landed and was almost immediately confronted with supporting 600 detainees and several hundred refugees.<sup>53</sup> Many of the soldiers had discarded rations in order to carry more ammunition, so they had only one or two days' rations with them.<sup>54</sup>

Nonetheless, the mission was accomplished. All students were rescued and a civilian government was established. Eighteen American service members died in action and 116 were wounded. Over 700 Cuban and Grenadan soldiers were captured, approximately 70 were killed, and more than 400 were wounded.<sup>55</sup> Both Bernard Coard and General Hudson Austin were captured. Elements of the XVIII Airborne Corps, under the command of Major General Jack Farris, would remain on the island to assist in peacekeeping duties.

### ***Conclusion***

Operation Urgent Fury was a success, but, as with other no-plan operations that preceded it, logistic support was unwieldy and inefficient.

Inadequacies identified in similar previous operations had not been addressed, with senior military leaders simply assuming that the nation's overwhelming resources meant that logistics would be plentiful in the area of operations. Consequently, old mistakes resurfaced in Grenada. The principal leaders in the operation acted in accordance with their training and experience, which deemphasized logistics, especially joint logistics. These systemic failings were compounded by promulgation of a joint logistic doctrine that in 1983 was at best vague and contentious.

Since then, much work has been done. The Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 has placed new emphasis on joint assignments and has given the combatant commander authority over subordinate commands in all aspects of logistics. Joint doctrine is being revised accordingly.<sup>56</sup> Force modernization has significantly improved our ability to deploy and sustain the force. Still, such improvements will be of little consequence unless logisticians are fully involved in the planning process.

The curricula of military schools still give scant attention to logistics and low-intensity conflict. The two-week General Officer Joint Warfighting Course at Maxwell Air Force Base has only two hours specifically devoted to logistics.<sup>57</sup> The Director of Logistics, Joint Staff, now addresses students attending the General Officer Joint Warfighting Course and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, but was not invited to address National War College students until April 1989.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, little has been written about joint logistics in our military journals.<sup>59</sup>

Our joint exercise program is much improved since 1983. The Joint Staff now conducts two no-notice exercises annually, and each CINC is encouraged to establish a separate program.<sup>60</sup> The stated objective of these exercises is to "practice and evaluate US capability to react to small-scale regional crises that require close-hold, no-notice planning."<sup>61</sup> The program is relatively new. To date, exercises have focused on interoperability and on command, control, and communications rather than logistics, although recent initiatives have been taken to lengthen the exercises in order to test the sustainment system.<sup>62</sup>

### ***Recommendations***

In retrospect, Urgent Fury—not Just Cause in Panama—continues as a vivid example of the most likely scenario that will confront US military forces. Like the interventions in Lebanon and the Dominican Republic, Urgent Fury was not an aberration. The recommendations that follow are not new, but neither have they been adopted. Unless they are fully implemented, future military leaders may learn the importance of logistics only through operational failure. Specifically:

- Joint commanders should be provided with an appropriate staff to recognize and react to logistic requirements of all services.

- The study of the art of logistics, including joint doctrine, should be an integral part of the curricula of all staff colleges and senior service colleges.
  - Logisticians should be integral actors in the planning process from the very beginning, including no-plan operations.
  - A collective logistic intelligence data base should be established on a geographic basis by the theater unified commanders to improve accessibility of information on transportation capabilities, locally available resources, and unusual logistic requirements.
  - The writing of clear and comprehensive joint logistic doctrine should be expedited, and the doctrine should then be widely and energetically promulgated.
  - Joint experience should become a prerequisite for command of a joint task force, and of course joint experience should continue to be a prerequisite for promotion to flag rank.
  - The No-Notice Interoperability Exercise Program should continue to be a top JCS priority, and the program should be expanded to fully test logistics.
- The study of Urgent Fury indicates that neither logistics nor the conduct of low-intensity/high-probability conflict received adequate attention in training and doctrine during the 1980s. Limited war in the Third World is doubtless the most likely challenge to US security interests during the 1990s. In preparing for such war, we must understand that sound logistics can indeed be a combat multiplier, but that unsound logistics can be a war-stopper in and of itself.

#### NOTES

1. This article is based on the research paper "Grenada: Logistical Insights for No-Plan Operations," coauthored with National Security Fellows Colonel Jerome G. Edwards, Lieutenant Colonel Michael A. Anastasio, and Lieutenant Colonel Michael E. Simmons for the National Security Program, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Academic Year 1988-89.
2. Graham Allison, Jr., former Dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, personal interview, 6 December 1988.
3. Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, *Discriminate Deterrence* (Washington: GPO, January 1988), p. 3.
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# Getting Back to Europe: Strategic Lift Needed Now More than Ever

DAVID S. SORENSON

**P**Peace, it would seem, is breaking out all over, and especially in Europe, where the breathtaking pace of change seems to outstrip one's ability to absorb its meaning.<sup>1</sup> The Warsaw Pact has fallen apart, the Soviet Union has turned its security attention inward, and even in a climate of high uncertainty, serious efforts at reducing East-West tension are under way.

Significant changes are clearly taking place in East-West relations, but one cannot be sure that the inviting path beyond the Cold War will not be dotted with pitfalls. After four decades, the post-World War II political status quo in Europe is unraveling in unpredictable ways, creating both new opportunities and new dangers for the United States and the USSR. Political unrest in Eastern Europe has become political upheaval, and unrest within the Soviet Union itself may grow to a point the Soviets find intolerable. The emerging reality of German reunification also generates new uncertainties, particularly in the USSR, where there is enormous apprehension concerning a reunited Germany's relation to NATO. Perhaps most important, the changes that now-President Gorbachev seems willing to accept may well be less acceptable to a successor, and the security of Europe may be a lot to rest on the shoulders of one leader in a nation where leadership change has to date been unpredictable.

Despite such uncertainties, the pressures for extensive force reductions, driven by both arms control and fiscal incentives, are as high as they have been in 40 years or more. The United States is seriously considering substantial military cutbacks, including the elimination of two carrier battle groups, two Army divisions, and the proposed deactivation of more than 50 military bases. Prospective reductions in US forces in Europe begin with the

withdrawal of 30,000 US troops under consideration at the ongoing Conventional Forces in Europe talks. The most recent proposal—as carried in President Bush's State of the Union address—calls for a ceiling of 195,000 US troops in Europe, down from the present 323,000. Such reductions may occur as much for fiscal reasons as for strategic ones, as the Defense Department will doubtless find it difficult to justify the size of the present force in Europe in the face of domestic economic needs and the apparent crumbling of the Soviet empire. In fact, the Army is now discussing plans for a cheaper, more mobile force suitable for counterterrorism, drug interdiction, and regional instability operations.<sup>2</sup>

Even before these stunning changes, reinforcement capability for conventional forces in Europe was woefully inadequate. But if the reductions come off as planned, that condition will deteriorate further. If the patient is ill now, he may soon be in critical condition. Regrettably, American force planning may have to repeat unlearned lessons from previous instances of European wartime supply. In World War I the United States was able to ship only 65 percent of required military supplies even in the last month of the war,<sup>3</sup> and during World War II several major operations in the European and North African theaters had to be postponed because of lift shortages.<sup>4</sup> Such failings could happen again, especially if similar assumptions are made about the reduced danger of war.

### ***Military Objectives for NATO***

For most of NATO's 40-year existence, the alliance's members relied on the threat of escalation to a nuclear response if a Soviet conventional attack could not be stopped quickly by conventional forces, because NATO nations as a whole were unwilling to take on the economic burden of matching Warsaw Pact conventional force levels. Consequently NATO conventional force planning has emphasized wars expected to last no longer than 30 days. Now, there is nothing magic about 30 days, of course, and the figure thus bears a sense of unreality about it.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, planners have had to plan for *some* duration, and preparing for 30 days of combat probably represents the limit to which NATO members have been willing to fund the necessary conventional forces and war supplies. But is such planning still realistic today

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and for the next decade, particularly in the aftermath of the INF treaty, which removed the weapons most symbolically linked to nuclear escalation threats? More important, does American force planning for NATO conventional emergencies allow for the reality of increased lift requirements? Retaining a smaller force of American troops in Europe will mean that we will need considerably more lift capacity to get a greater number of American forces back to Europe if war breaks out.

NATO planners have their work cut out for them if the conventional deterrent is to remain robust. Specifically, NATO needs to improve the capacity to stem a Soviet conventional push into Western Europe quickly, before it reaches, say, 100 kilometers. Second, after attacking and defeating Soviet second-echelon forces, the Soviet thrust must be turned back or defeated or weakened to the point where the Soviets become willing to seek a negotiated termination of the conflict. Such a feat will be difficult, especially in the face of US troop reductions, unless adequate prewar supply and trans-Atlantic lift is available.

### ***Prospects for Trans-Atlantic Wartime Sustainability***

US supply and transportation problems for a conventional conflict in Europe can be divided into at least three categories: prewar supply, trans-Atlantic transportation, and theater mobility. The first two concern us here.

**Prewar Supply.** As World War II-era supply ships rusted into oblivion in the 1970s, trans-Atlantic military resupply capacity was reduced, and consequently more emphasis was placed on the stockpiling of supplies in Europe. In fact, as US troop strength in Germany was drawn down during the Vietnam War, it became clear that the United States lacked the capacity to rapidly move both men and equipment back to Europe, and so equipment was left on the Continent, stored in ways that would provide for unit needs.<sup>6</sup> This concept became known as POMCUS (Pre-positioning of Materiel Configured to Unit Sets), and today it forms the basis for rapid reinforcement efforts.

POMCUS levels, though, have lagged behind anticipated needs, particularly if the "ten divisions in ten days" goal is a planning benchmark.<sup>7</sup> According to a senior staff member of the US European Command, POMCUS levels may be expanded to meet requirements for six additional divisions and 60 fighter squadrons beyond those currently deployed in Europe "presumably before 1997."<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to determine whether POMCUS stocks can be built to reach these levels. On the one hand, between 1981 and 1986, POMCUS levels were increased by more than 70 percent, though the level of increase varied. For example, aircraft repair parts increased by 83 percent, but ammunition stocks by only 20 percent.<sup>9</sup> It is difficult to be optimistic about further POMCUS increases in the coming years of defense cutbacks—especially given the recent reports that some defense items have been over-stockpiled.



POMCUS dependence is limited not only by shortages, but also by the vulnerability of the sites themselves to attacks in the early stages of conflict, perhaps even before conflict begins. The range of the Soviet SS-21 missile armed with conventional warheads covers most POMCUS sites in the Federal Republic of Germany, with 770 of these missiles potentially available. *Spetsnaz* units may also seize, damage, or destroy some POMCUS capacity in the first days of the war.

Beyond POMCUS lies a more general problem with shortages of materiel and equipment, which again are likely to become more serious as defense budgets are cut in coming years. Ammunition is a case in point—it is, for the most part, expensive to buy in large quantities, particularly in the era of smart weapons.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, projected American defense budget trends suggest that the FY 88 reductions in the ammunition accounts, along with other sustainability programs, will continue. The Air Force's tactical missile and ammunition budget was reduced in FY 88 by 24 percent over its 1987 request, and the Army's account in this category was reduced by 11.2 percent. Fiscal 1990-91 budgets indicate even more serious shortages, as cancellations or deferrals have been announced for a number of ammunition programs. And the capacity to surge to wartime ammunition levels will be hampered as ammunition plants are shut down or put in layaway status, with a loss of more than 7000 trained workers in the next three or four years.<sup>11</sup> Should war break out in Europe and ammunition usage rates there approach those of Vietnam, shortages could develop quickly for American forces.

Repair parts accounts for all three services also have been reduced, though the Air Force has been hardest hit at 33.5 percent.<sup>12</sup> Helicopter spares were reduced by almost half in FY 88 from the original Objectives Memorandum for that year.<sup>13</sup> This latter area is especially important for wartime planning, as just one case indicates: the Army purchases enough helicopter repair parts to sustain about 75 percent of peacetime flying rates of 14 to 20 hours a month. Combat rates for helicopters, though, are calculated to be a minimum of 76 hours a month.<sup>14</sup> At a time when Army doctrine stresses mobility, one can only hope that the budget for leather boots has not been cut too severely, because more soldiers may be marching and fewer helicopters will be flying troops into battle.

*Trans-Atlantic Surface Transport.* The past several decades have witnessed a chronic decline in military transportation, particularly in the maritime dimension. During these years US shipbuilding capacity has declined considerably, and as World War II-era ships have been retired they have not been replaced. The most noteworthy loss has been in troop transports, as evidenced by the fact that up through the late 1960s the Military Sea Transportation Service (the predecessor of the Military Sealift Command) operated at least twelve P-2 and C-4 transports, most with a capacity to carry

over 3000 troops. Today none are operating and most have either been scrapped or are in storage in such dilapidated condition that only a heroic effort could make them serviceable again.

In the late 1960s, Congress refused to fund replacement programs, including the Fast Deployment Logistics Ship, out of fear that such capacity would be used by future Presidents to make Vietnam-like interventions easier.<sup>15</sup> More recently the Navy has attempted to reduce sealift shortfalls by designating commercial container ships as a part of the Ready Reserve Force, with some success. Sealift reserve increased from 26 to 151 ships between 1980 and 1988, and the Navy projects that combined sealift will be able to carry around 85 percent of the one million ton goal of unit equipment on a single voyage. Today, though, the Navy can accomplish only 60 percent of that objective, though the goal at the end of the 1983 Five Year Defense Plan was 90 percent.<sup>16</sup>

Other serious shortfalls remain. The President's Commission on the Merchant Marine and Defense reported that despite an investment of \$7 billion since 1980, the shortage of sealift has *worsened*, with 42 ships fewer than required now, and a 200-ship shortage expected by the year 2000.<sup>17</sup> Forty years ago the United States operated 5000 ships in the Merchant Marine, but today the number is less than 500, of which 20 percent are inactive, leaving a shortfall in dry cargo lift of around 100,000 short tons of cargo. In addition, 20 to 30 new tankers will be required to transport fuels to Europe.<sup>18</sup> Amphibious lift, critical for the Northern Flank of NATO in particular, is also short—in 1987, total capacity stood at 87 percent of troop lift, 78 percent of vehicle lift, 69 percent of dry cargo lift, and 66 percent of helicopter lift. Prospects for improvement remain slim.<sup>19</sup> The consequences are simple—the “ten divisions in ten days” goal cannot now be met; as General Bernard Rogers has asserted, it will take 30 days at best to get ten additional divisions across the Atlantic.<sup>20</sup> But General Rogers, of course, made his comments before the reductions in US forces in Europe were proposed—now ten divisions could become 15 divisions by the mid-1990s, and 30 days could stretch to 60 days, or longer.

Things seem likely to get much worse when other problems facing maritime military lift are considered. One is the competing uses for ships designated for logistics purposes, since some ships of the Combat Logistics Force can be used either to supply NATO forces ashore in Europe or to provision US and allied naval vessels in combat or on patrol at sea. Should combat ships be used extensively in the Atlantic, and it is reasonable to expect that they will be, then lift capacity to NATO will be sacrificed. While the Combat Logistics Force is specifically designated for combat support at sea, it still represents an asset that could otherwise support land forces in Europe, and it might even draw from ships slated for trans-Atlantic military supply since the Navy suffers a shortfall of some 34 ships in the best-case scenario.<sup>21</sup>

A second factor is the continuing reduction of the US flag commercial fleet, which is expected to decline from 536 ships to less than 350 toward the next century.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, by 2000 there may be as few as 220 ships, as no merchant ships have been built in US yards since 1985 and none are presently under construction. And, of the 536 merchant vessels now in service, many are container ships which pose particular problems for military lift purposes. Container ships make up about 79 percent of total dry cargo vessels, but because much military cargo is too large for containers and their offloading equipment, only 21 percent of such cargo can now be moved by container ships.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, many ports in both North America and Europe are limited in terms of container offloading capacity, and serious bottlenecks will likely develop at both ends of the routes as ships wait for available offloading facilities. Maritime personnel strength also has declined, with a present shortfall of around 6200 even for peacetime requirements.<sup>24</sup> This is a very small base from which to build an expanded work force for wartime needs, particularly on a long-term basis. In a mobilization crisis, inexperienced crews would be inevitable, and they would pose serious operating problems in the first and most critical months of a conventional war in Europe. Replacing ships lost in combat is another limiting factor on long-term logistics support through sealift.

The scope of the problem is not easy to determine, since different studies have reached different conclusions. One study concluded that "foreseeable initial mobilization requirements could be met despite the declining industrial base."<sup>25</sup> The report goes on, however, to note that the most efficient way to build new tankers and dry cargo vessels would be to rely on "highly specialized yards using the latest technology . . . and . . . there are no such private yards building commercial ships at present."<sup>26</sup> In fact there are fewer yards in general. Twenty-one yards in the United States have closed just since a 1982 survey of yard capacity was done, and five more have lost certification due to inadequate facilities.<sup>27</sup> Thus it is not surprising that the National Defense Shipyard Study was pessimistic in its estimates of yard capacity, projecting work force shortages in 39 percent of existing yards, including seven private and three Navy yards on the East Coast.<sup>28</sup> For logistics purposes, the shortfall may be even more critical, since repair and replacement of battle-damaged combat ships may take priority over supply ships.

Several improvements are either under way or being contemplated which may help address these problems—one being the acquisition finally of eight new Fast Sealift Ships which have been on hold since 1980 (the residue of the programs mentioned above that were killed by Congress). These ships are capable of 30 knots and feature roll-on/roll-off cargo loading and discharge. There are also proposals for a surface effects ship that would reportedly be capable of speeds sufficient to reduce the transit time from the United States to Europe from the present 10 to 19 days to around *three* days.<sup>29</sup> Fuel

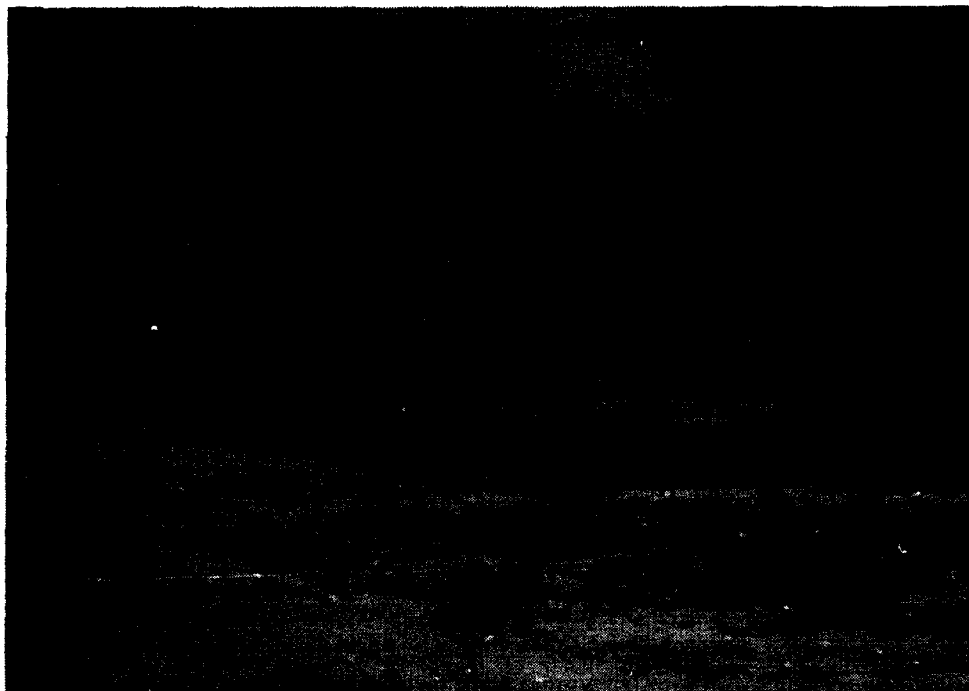
offloading capacity has also been improved through the Offshore Petroleum Discharge System, which will allow tankers to offload from up to four miles offshore, thus alleviating port congestion. Development of a causeway system also should make it easier to offload containerized cargo.<sup>30</sup> Finally, 13 Maritime Prepositioned Ships are in operation in three squadrons of the Military Sealift Command, one of which is stationed in the North Atlantic and carries enough equipment and supplies to support a Marine Expeditionary Brigade for 30 days in the Northern Flank. These vessels, coupled with eight Military Sealift Command vehicle cargo ships acquired from Sea-Land Services, do modernize the sealift capacity of the United States somewhat, though much more needs to be done.<sup>31</sup> And it should be remembered that these improvements were funded largely during the first Reagan term, a period of defense spending not to be seen soon again.

### *Trans-Atlantic Airlift Capacity*

Transport aircraft also are in short supply despite efforts to add capacity during the Reagan Administration. At present, 1094 aircraft are assigned to the Military Airlift Command, but 746 of these are turboprop C-130s with limited range and cargo capacity. The burden of ferrying military cargo and troops across the Atlantic will fall to 89 C-5s and 250 C-141s, together capable of moving 42 million ton-miles daily (MTM/D), which is only 64 percent of the 66 MTM/D requirement.<sup>32</sup> Indeed the requirement of 66 MTM/D may represent what was politically possible in 1983 when it was set—the real combat requirement could be as high as 100 to 125.<sup>33</sup>

In the face of the airlift shortfall the Air Force has ordered the new C-17, but this craft faces an uncertain future. The first C-17 is expected to be delivered in July 1990, and if the full order of 210 is filled, the C-17 will be able to absorb 20 MTM/D, or 46 percent of the airlift goal.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the plane allows shorter runways, and thus more airfields would become available (132 fields for the C-17 versus 47 for the C-141 and C-5 in West Germany). The C-17, however, often appears on the short list of new military projects that could be sacrificed in the name of federal budget deficit reduction, and the prospect of reaching the full 210 originally planned is dubious over the next decade. In fact, the FY 91 budget amount for the C-17 has already been reduced by Congress by more than \$400 million.<sup>35</sup> And even if the plane is built in the requested numbers, there may not be enough pilots to fly them—pilot shortages are becoming critical. In 1988, 114 of the Military Airlift Command's C-141 pilots left the service, and the retention rate overall for the command dropped from 79 percent in 1983 to 34 percent in 1988.<sup>36</sup>

There is, of course, a contingency plan to use commercial aircraft under the Civil Reserve Air Fleet, now at 387 aircraft. Most of these aircraft are passenger planes, which could augment troop lift but could not be of much



**The C-17, here shown in an artist's conception, could operate from shorter runways. If the full order of 210 is built, it would meet 46 percent of the airlift goal.**

assistance in cargo lift, particularly for the outsized items that are likely to have high replacement requirements. Moreover, the airlines flying these planes have modified very few of them with the necessary communications, deck, and door changes.<sup>37</sup> In addition, this contingency plan to activate the Civil Reserve Air Fleet has never been fully tested, and it is quite likely that confusion and congestion would be the primary results if suddenly large numbers of civilian planes flown by civilian pilots converged at a few military airfields in the United States to fly troops to Europe, where they would face the prospect of being shot out of the sky. Finally, landing space would be at a premium, and most commercial planes are not designed for the unprepared surfaces that the C-17 can land on.

Both airlift and sealift face an additional problem—the forces they are to move have gotten larger and heavier since lift requirements were last set in 1980. As Benjamin Schemmer of *Armed Forces Journal International* reports:

Army mechanized divisions are 40-percent heavier—the 101st Air Assault Division 90-percent bigger, the 82d Airborne 29-percent heavier than in 1980. . . . Even the light divisions now require about five percent more than the Army envisioned in 1985. . . . The Army now wants to convert the 9th Motorized Infantry Division into a mechanized division: that would increase its lift requirements by 66 percent, from 730 C-17 sorties to 1,209.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Do Changes in Conventional Doctrine Require Changes in Logistics?***

US Army doctrine for NATO has put more emphasis in recent years on mobility and quick-strike operations, and these changes may complicate resupply problems. Depots for POMCUS, for example, may have to be made smaller and more decentralized to shorten potential supply lines to forces on the move. More trucks, barges, and small transport aircraft will be needed, and in the latter category US capabilities are actually declining, one of the few areas to do so during the Reagan Administration.<sup>39</sup> Fuel requirements in particular will increase dramatically if regular divisions are used in more mobile roles, and fuel is even more difficult to move on the battlefield than is ammunition.<sup>40</sup>

Light divisions may reduce resupply problems because they require lower levels of supply, but not necessarily by much. Light infantry divisions are expected to operate for 48 hours without resupply in low-intensity situations where regular infantry divisions can hold for 72 hours. Thus, while light divisions may consume less, they would also require supply lines to be reestablished in less time.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, if NATO doctrine is aimed at expanding conventional deterrence in the wake of the INF treaty, conventional forces face the real probability of having to remain in combat longer than has been anticipated in the past. No longer can deterrence depend so heavily on the threat of nuclear escalation in a matter of a few days. NATO must now be prepared to defeat an enemy whose logistical lines run over much shorter routes and are far less complicated.<sup>42</sup>

### ***Conclusions***

Can the United States provide trans-Atlantic supply for NATO? To answer that question, a number of factors must be weighed carefully in consideration of both requirements and risks. Despite the dramatically favorable march of events, the volatile nature of European politics and East-West relations will always threaten the peaceful status of the European political landscape. War remains a possibility, even if the risks of it breaking out may now be lower than at any time since the start of the Cold War. It is also possible that such a war could become protracted, given the reduced likelihood of either side playing its nuclear card. Should a war start, remain conventional, and last more than a month or so, it is unlikely that the United States could move the resources needed to fight such a war effectively.

NATO must be prepared to survive a Soviet breakthrough, and to challenge the Soviets by outlasting them on the field of battle. To do that, US forces, as a part of NATO, must be able to supply troops and materiel swiftly and to sustain those resources for much longer than 30 days. Unfortunately, it appears that the United States has insufficient stores and lift capacity to fulfill this vital role, particularly in view of the impending removal of substantial US forces from

Europe. In years past, the United States has relied on sufficient wartime delays to permit emergency buildups to compensate for a lack of prewar preparation. Given the current deficiencies in both supply and lift, however, that extra time may no longer be available should war come once again to Europe.

#### NOTES

1. Previous versions of this article were presented to the 1989 International Studies Association conference and the 1989 International Security Studies Section conference.

2. Michael R. Gordon, with Bernard E. Trainor, "Army, Facing Cuts, Reported Seeking to Reshape Itself," *The New York Times*, 12 December 1989, p. 1.

3. James A. Huston, *The Sinews of War: Army Logistics, 1775-1953* (Washington: US Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1966), pp. 352-68.

4. Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy—1940-43* (Washington: US Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1955), esp. pp. 205, 296, 318, 345, 384, and 633; Leighton and Coakley, *Global Logistics and Strategy, 1943-1945* (Washington: US Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1968), pp. 116, 385.

5. One example of the 30-day syndrome may be found in ammunition planning, where Army policy is to procure weapons only if they can be provided with a combat ammunition load and a 30-day war reserve supply. See US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Ammunition Requirements and Production Base*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Preparedness of the Committee on Armed Services, 99th Cong., 1st sess., Part 2 (Washington: GPO, 1986), p. 10 (emphasis supplied). Another example is the post-1982 Army and Air Force definition of the C-1 readiness level, defined as "fully ready" and therefore equipped to fight for 30 days. See Lawrence J. Korb, "Did Readiness Get its Fair Share of the Defense Buildup in the First Reagan Administration?" in *Defense Policy in the Reagan Administration*, ed. William P. Snyder and James Brown (Washington: National Defense Univ. Press, 1988), p. 413.

6. Daniel J. Nelson, *A History of U.S. Military Forces in Germany* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1987), p. 90.

7. US Army, *United States Army Posture Statement, Fiscal Year 1989* (Washington: GPO, 1988), p. 26.

8. Testimony of Major General C. Norman Wood, US Congress, Senate, *Alliance and Defense Capabilities in Europe*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Conventional Forces and Alliance Defense of the Committee on Armed Services, 100th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington: GPO, 1988), p. 35. POMCUS designated for US Marines in Norway may present a special problem in that it may deemphasize the Corps' amphibious role. Also, because of the particular cold-weather orientation of the equipment, it would prevent the flexibility of transfer to other NATO areas. See Kenneth A. Myers, "U.S. Power Projection in the Northern Flank," in *Projection of Power: Perspectives, Perceptions, and Problems*, ed. Uri Ra'anana, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., and Geoffrey Kemp (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1982), p. 197.

9. Statement from Major General Thomas L. Craig, Director, Plans and Policy, US European Command, in US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989*, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, 100th Cong., 1st sess., Part 2 (Washington: GPO, 1987), pp. 365-66.

10. David C. Hendrickson, *Reforming Defense: The State of American Civil-Military Relations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1988), p. 95. Hendrickson argues that this fact will mean that ammunition levels for NATO will be exhausted in the first few days of a conventional war in Europe.

11. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991*, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, 101st Cong., 1st sess., Part 3 (Washington: GPO, 1989), p. 314.

12. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989*, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, 100th Cong., 1st sess., Part 1 (Washington: GPO, 1987), p. 41. Information on the FY 90-91 budget is from Mark E. Morrow and Glenn W. Goodman, Jr., "SDI, Rail M-X, ATF Get Boost Under Final Reagan Budget Request," *Armed Forces Journal International*, February 1989, table, p. 11.

13. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for . . . 1988 and 1989*, p. 105.

14. G. Michael Muller, *Choppers Grounded: The Supply-Demand Problem* (Washington: National Defense Univ. Press, 1988, p. 15; Michael Moodie and Brent Fischmann, "An Action Plan for NATO," *NATO Review*, 36 (February 1988), 21.

15. US Congress, Senate, *NATO Defense and the INF Treaty*, Hearings and Meetings before the Committee on Armed Services, 100th Cong., 2d sess. (Washington: GPO, 1988), Part 1, p. 41.
16. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for . . . 1988 and 1989*, p. 382, 387.
17. Scott C. Truver, "Crisis in US Strategic Sealift Capability," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 21 January 1989, pp. 90-91; Andrew Rosenthal, "U.S. Panel Warns of Transport Ship Shortage," *The New York Times*, 19 February 1989, p. 33.
18. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for . . . 1988 and 1989*, Part 7, p. 3581.
19. *Ibid.*, Part 7, p. 3577.
20. US Congress, Senate, *NATO Defense and the INF Treaty*, Part 2, p. 142.
21. *Issues and Options for the Navy's Combat Logistics Force* (Washington: Congressional Budget Office, April 1988), pp. 14-16; US Congress, Senate, *National Shipbuilding Industrial Base Act of 1985*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Sea Power and Force Projection of the Committee on Armed Services, 99th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington: GPO, 1986), p. 12.
22. US Congress, Senate, *National Shipbuilding Industrial Base Act of 1985*, p. 12.
23. US Congress, Senate, *Proposed Integration of the Military Traffic Management Command and the Military Sea Lift into a Unified Command*, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, 97th Cong., 2d sess. (Washington: GPO, 1982), p. 16. Changes are under way to improve container handling through the Sealift Enhancement Program; see US Congress, Senate, *International Security Environment (Strategy)*, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Services, 101st Cong., 1st sess. (Washington: GPO, 1989), p. 538.
24. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for . . . 1988 and 1989*, Part 7, p. 3581. Crew requirements, though, are smaller; for example, the C-10 cargo ship requires a crew of 14, compared to crew requirements of 35 for a similar ship ten years ago.
25. US Navy, *The Relationship Between Price Competition and Mobilization Capability in Naval Shipbuilding and Repair, A Report to the United States Congress* (Committees on Armed Services of the Industrial Base for Construction, Overhaul, and Repair of Naval Vessels), January 1986, p. 3.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
27. *Ibid.*, Appendix B, pp. B-1, B-3.
28. Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Shipbuilding and Logistics), *National Defense Shipyard Study (NADES)* (Washington: Department of Defense, February 1985), presentation copy, pp. 19, 21 (the full study is classified).
29. US Congress, Senate, *NATO Defense and the INF Treaty*, Part 2, p. 173.
30. US Congress, House of Representatives, *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1988/1989, HR 1748 and Oversight of Previously Authorized Programs*, Committee on Armed Services, Seapower and Strategic and Critical Materials Subcommittee, 100th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington: GPO, 1987), p. 575.
31. *Seapower*, January 1988, pp. 185-86.
32. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorization for . . . 1988 and 1989*, Part 5, p. 696.
33. Thomas D. Cohoon, "Airlift—Reinforcing Europe," *Airlift*, 11 (Winter 1989), 10.
34. Jeffrey P. Rhodes, "The First C-17," *Air Force*, August 1988, p. 54.
35. Benjamin F. Schemmer, "Airlift, Sealift in Short Supply at Very Time Need Grows Fastest," *Armed Forces Journal International*, May 1989, p. 66.
36. US Congress, Senate, *International Security Environment (Strategy)*, p. 525.
37. James I. McBride, "USTRANSCOM: A Modern-Day David Versus Goliath?" *Airlift*, 11 (Winter 1989), 7. McBride also notes that the number of Civil Reserve Air Fleet cargo planes has declined from 126 in 1982 to 75 today.
38. Mark E. Morrow, "DoD/Congress Relationship will Improve in '90s," *Armed Forces Journal International*, December 1989, pp. 9, 12.
39. From 1980 to 1988, intra-theater airlift declined from 594 aircraft to 513. US Congress, Senate, *Department of Defense Authorizations for . . . 1988 and 1988*, Part 2, p. 387.
40. Richard K. Betts, "Dubious Reform: Strategism versus Managerialism," in *The Defense Reform Debate: Issues and Analysis*, ed. Asa A. Clark et al. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1984), p. 75.
41. US Congress, Senate, *Army's Light Division*, Hearings before the Committee on Armed Service, 99th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington: GPO, 1985), p. 48.
42. Soviet supply lines do not run over water, and do not pose the on-load/off-load requirements that supplies from the United States do. There are fewer bottlenecks facing the Soviets, since there are fewer transfer points for Soviet supplies and equipment. Soviet lines are vulnerable to deep-strike attacks from air, but are likely to be defended with a robust air defense system.



# Thirteen Critical Decisions at Waterloo

FRANK W. MEYERS

**A** modern military leader can learn a great deal about the art and science of warfare by studying the battles of Napoleon. Although the means and methods of land warfighting have changed drastically since the French Emperor's time, many fundamentals—such as campaign planning and maneuvering of large forces—remain much the same. The lessons to be learned from such study take on particular contemporary relevance when the analysis proceeds in terms of the modern Principles of War.<sup>1</sup> Napoleon's Waterloo campaign, which sees its 175th anniversary in June of this year, dramatically demonstrates how one of history's greatest commanders applied these important concepts in reaching his decisions.<sup>2</sup>

During the Waterloo campaign, Napoleon made 13 significant decisions, each of which concerned critical features of the campaign plan or one of the major engagements. These decisions and their applicable principles will be assessed from Napoleon's perspective—concentrating on his options, his circumstances, his apparent rationale for selecting these courses of action. Moreover, the picture of the battlefield will be that of the French as it developed in their command post. Thus our picture will be obscured by the same foggy information that clouded Napoleon's vision at the time.

The events of the campaign encompass four months starting with Napoleon's escape on 1 March 1815 from banishment on the island of Elba and ending with his defeat near Waterloo on the evening of 18 June. Napoleon had been forced into exile on Elba in 1814 as a result of his obsessive attempt to dominate all of Europe. The Bourbon monarchy that followed Napoleon's abdication was neither wise nor effective, and the French people quickly grew dissatisfied. Sensing an opportunity to reinstate his empire, Napoleon returned to France on 20 March to undertake one last grand gamble. He was triumphantly received in Paris, and Louis XVIII fled to Belgium.

The following period came to be known as the Hundred Days—it would be approximately that long until the Bourbons were back on the French throne. Meanwhile, the Seventh Coalition (consisting of Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, and Russia) was meeting at the Congress of Vienna to reconstruct the map of Europe. Upon hearing of Napoleon's return, the allies declared war against their old enemy. The English Duke of Wellington and the Prussian Prince Blücher von Wahlstadt, with their two armies, were to invade France promptly through Belgium; the Austrians and Russians were to follow later from the east.

• *Decision One.* Napoleon was thus brought to his first decision: the strategy for his campaign against the allies. Only two strategic options were open. Since the allies were moving on him, he could mass troops around Paris and initially defend in place. Or he could seize the offensive and move out to meet the invaders on grounds of his own choosing.

If he chose to defend, he would possibly have until mid-August to prepare, while the allies consolidated and traveled the separating distance. However, a third of his territory and its inhabitants would be left undefended. Besides abandoning resources to the enemy, such a course would have a devastating effect on the already-low morale of the French people.

The second and bolder plan was to attack his enemies before they could consolidate. Napoleon could first take on the English<sup>3</sup> and Prussian armies, who constituted the most immediate threat, then move east to confront the Austrians and Russians. From French sympathizers in the Netherlands, he had a clear picture of the enemy's disposition. The Prussians, with approximately 117,000 men, were dispersed around Liège with lines of communication running to Germany; the English, with approximately 100,000, were spread around Brussels with lines of communication running to the English Channel. It would take the allies at least three days to concentrate their forces. If Napoleon could confront either army individually with his force of 120,000 men, he could defeat each in detail before the two could unite.

His decision was to attack Wellington and Blücher in mid-June. He would split his Armée du Nord into two wings and a central reserve. Because the allied soldiers were mostly novices, the experienced French army—even split into smaller elements—seemingly could prevail over the larger allied forces. Each wing would have one of the allied armies as its objective, while Napoleon would control the reserve to reinforce either wing. His axis of

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advance was to be along the boundary between the two allied armies, a customary weak spot in all composite forces.

Napoleon's decision was consistent with two characteristics displayed throughout the 23 years and some 60 battles of his active military career. First, he firmly believed in the offensive, especially the quick knockout blow.<sup>4</sup> The defensive was anathema to him.<sup>5</sup> And his foremost objective was always the destruction of the enemy's forces.<sup>6</sup> These beliefs correspond with two modern principles of war: seizing the *offensive* to hold the initiative, maintain freedom of action, and achieve results; and directing every operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable *objective*.

• *Decision Two.* Napoleon's second decision was the selection of his immediate subordinate commanders. Historians are near unanimous in disparaging these selections,<sup>7</sup> and Napoleon later blamed three of these generals for his defeat.

Napoleon's scheme of operating with two wings and a separate reserve demanded inspired leadership on the wings and a strong chief of staff. The most able independent commander available was Marshal Nicolas Jean de Dieu Soult. Instead of being given command of one of the wings, Soult was made chief of staff, a post for which he had neither experience nor talent. His appointment may have had a political basis, since Soult had been Minister of War under the Bourbons, and his position in Napoleon's headquarters would convey a united French image.

The command of the left wing was given to Marshal Michel Ney, renowned as a fighter but not as an independent thinker.<sup>8</sup> Ney may have been selected for political reasons also, because he had defected from commanding the Bourbon army to aid Napoleon's triumphant return to Paris.<sup>9</sup> Marshal Emmanuel Grouchy was chosen to command the right wing.<sup>10</sup> Grouchy was originally selected to command the cavalry—a post for which he was well qualified—but was later promoted to command the wing, despite the fact that he had never commanded even a corps.

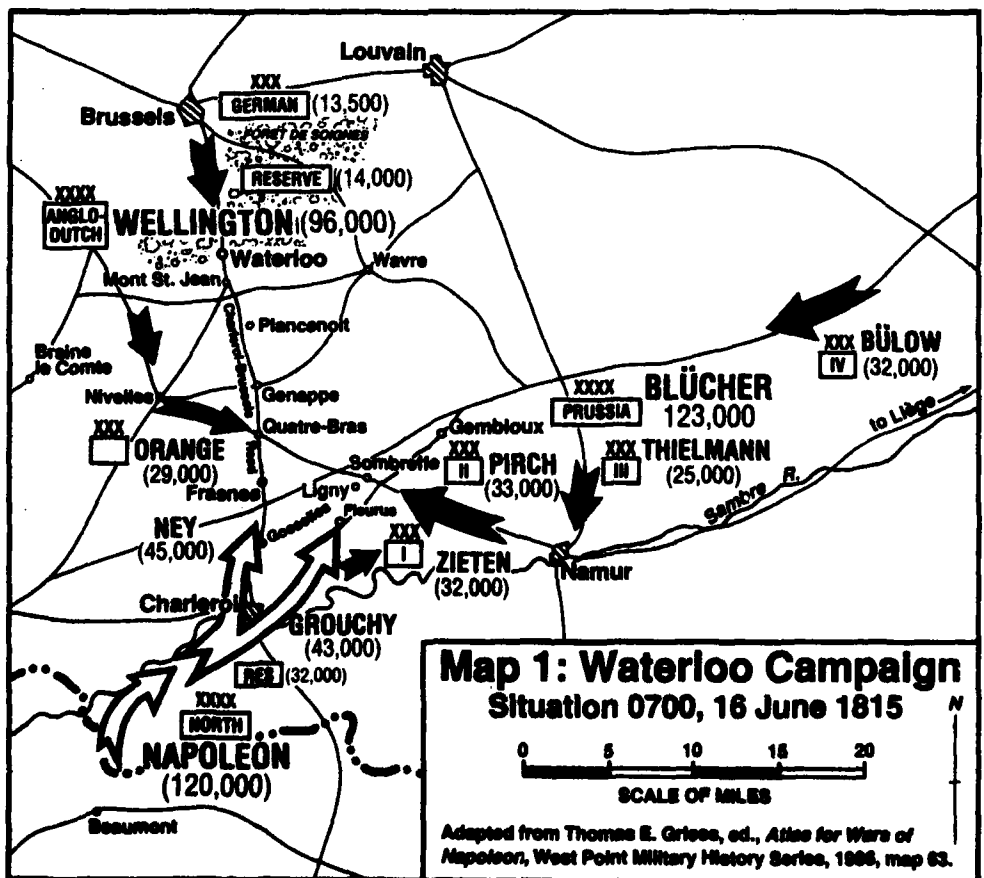
If, as most historians believe, there were more suitable officers available, why did Napoleon choose so poorly? Apparently he believed he had made adequate appointments under the press of time. After all, each of the trio was a capable, experienced officer. Hindsight shows that the primary problem was the inappropriate role each was assigned. Moreover, Napoleon may have thought that he could compensate for any of their weaknesses by his own presence at every critical engagement. His insistence on unifying command in his own hands was the foundation of his many victorious campaigns.<sup>11</sup> The modern principle of *unity of command* has a similar purpose, ensuring that all efforts are focused on a common goal.

• *Decision Three.* Napoleon's third decision was his choice of the time and place of his initial engagement with the allied forces occupying the

Low Countries. Judging that they would not be ready to advance before 1 July, Napoleon decided to assemble his army in secret near the Belgian border, then strike suddenly across the Sambre River at their main junction and defeat each in turn.

The concentration of the Armée du Nord was a masterpiece of speed and secrecy. It involved the movement of five corps,<sup>12</sup> the Imperial Guard,<sup>13</sup> and the reserve cavalry into a zone 30 kilometers square from a dispersal area of more than 200 kilometers.<sup>14</sup> On 14 June, Napoleon arrived to assume command. At 0200 hours on the 15th, the French force began moving over the border, taking both Wellington and Blücher almost completely by surprise.<sup>15</sup> In our age of sophisticated surveillance technologies, striking the enemy unaware or unprepared becomes more difficult, but such strategic surprise remains an especially important and effective principle.

Upon crossing into Belgium, the French advanced north and by 1500 took Charleroi. The two wings pushed ahead while the reserve concentrated in and around Charleroi itself. Ney, who had just received command of the left wing, headed in the direction of Wellington's army and reached Gosselies at about 2000, but not his target of Frasnes. On the right, keying on Blücher,



Grouchy's men reached the outskirts of Fleurus, but failed to take the town before darkness.

By nightfall on 15 June, Napoleon had concentrated his army at the very hinge pin of the Prussian and English forces. He also retained full liberty to make his main effort on whichever flank presented the maximum advantage.

• *Decision Four.* The next step was to drive the two enemy armies away from each other by causing each to fall back on its line of communication. Here Napoleon made his fourth decision. On the 16th, Ney's left wing was to attack Wellington to inflict heavy damage and drive him away from Blücher. Simultaneously, Grouchy's right wing was to attack the Prussians, seize Gembloux and Sombrefe, and sever the crucial allied juncture. Napoleon intended to throw his might initially against the English, believing that Wellington was more likely to stand and fight a decisive battle than Blücher. Additionally, if Napoleon could defeat or drive through Wellington, the Emperor might successfully occupy Brussels.<sup>16</sup>

About 0600, Napoleon dictated dispatches to his subordinate commanders. The letter to Grouchy explained his role for the day and told him to be prepared late in the day to swing part of his force down the lateral road to assist Ney in the day's main conflict against Wellington. The dispatch to Ney summarized Grouchy's instructions and gave specific instructions for the placement of some of Ney's units. In conclusion, Napoleon ordered Ney "to remain constantly on the alert, ready to take the road at once and march rapidly and unhindered on Brussels."<sup>17</sup> These orders may have led Ney to think that he was not to move on his own initiative, for he made no attempt to take Quatre Bras during the morning. But surely he must have known that this was one of his main objectives.

Napoleon's employment of Grouchy's force is comparable to the modern principle of *economy of force*. Although Grouchy would have his whole force initially to attack whatever Prussians he encountered, shortly thereafter he would send a portion to beef up Ney, continuing his own mission at scaled-down strength.

At about 0800, Napoleon received a message from Grouchy reporting that his cavalry screen had spotted strong columns of Prussian troops advancing toward Sombrefe. Napoleon rode to Fleurus to see the situation for himself, arriving at 1000. The disposition of the Prussians convinced him that it was no rear guard but a force covering a general allied advance.

• *Decision Five.* Because of these developments, Napoleon made his fifth decision. His main attention on the 16th would be directed against Blücher at Ligny;<sup>18</sup> Ney's operation would be subordinate.<sup>1</sup> Napoleon's plan was to contain Blücher's left with cavalry, then engage the Prussian center and right frontally, compelling Blücher to commit and exhaust his reserves. An element of Ney's would be ordered to arrive at 1800 to fall upon the rear of Blücher's right wing,<sup>19</sup> then the reserve would smash through the center.

Napoleon expected to destroy two-thirds of Blücher's army and force the remaining third to fall back on Liège, away from Wellington.

Still featuring an *economy-of-force* action, decision five also included an excellent tactical application of the principle of *maneuver*, another characteristic of Napoleon's style of combat. The object of maneuver is to concentrate or to disperse forces in a manner designed to place the enemy at a disadvantage, thus achieving results that would otherwise be more costly in men and materiel.

At 1400 the French troops began moving forward.<sup>20</sup> By 1430 the cavalry was containing the Prussian left, and the bulk of Grouchy's force was attacking. Because resistance was stubborn, by 1515 Napoleon had sent for early augmentation from Ney.<sup>21</sup> However, by 1700 Blücher appeared to have exhausted his reserves and was weakening. Napoleon called up the Imperial Guard from reserve. Just as he was about to administer the coup de grace at 1800 an unidentified column of troops appeared on the left flank, causing Napoleon to suspend the Guard attack. The column turned out to be d'Erlon's corps, the support from Ney, which had gotten out of position. Before they could be redirected, they were ordered back to Quatre Bras. As a result of this confusion, Napoleon's master stroke was delayed an hour. Then, as darkness closed in, the Prussians counterattacked. The French repulsed this effort and, by 1930, had launched the grand assault in a heavy downpour. Under the tremendous impact of the assault, the Prussian line broke at 2000 and Blücher's army was driven from the battlefield.<sup>22</sup>

• *Decision Six.* It appeared that Napoleon had achieved a great victory, but it was not complete. He should have ordered an immediate pursuit to exploit his success and ensure that he had indeed reduced the Prussian army to a disorganized rabble. Decision six, then, was not to exploit the Prussian defeat. Napoleon believed the Prussian main body to be incapable of further large-scale resistance. Additionally, there was every reason to expect that the battered remnants of Blücher's army were falling back on their lines of communication toward Liège.<sup>23</sup> Above all, Napoleon had received no news from Ney since mid-afternoon, and it appeared prudent to delay the follow-up on the right until the left wing's fortunes had been determined. Consequently, Napoleon ordered Grouchy merely to have the enemy pursued at daybreak.<sup>24</sup>

Exploitation and pursuit highlight an important dimension of the principle of the *offensive*. Exploitation seeks to keep the enemy under pressure, compound his disorganization, and erode his will to resist. The object of pursuit is annihilation of the opposing force. Both phases reinforce success and ensure that the objective of the offensive is fully accomplished.

Nonetheless, the 16th had been successful for Napoleon. The exception was Ney's failure to take Quatre Bras which, in turn, interfered with his support of the Emperor at Ligny. Ney had not issued his orders for the 16th until 1100, and his forces had not started advancing until 1400. At 1500 Ney's

attack was succeeding, but at that point Ney received Napoleon's revised plan, which envisaged Ney swinging over to help at Ligny. Consequently, d'Erlon's corps was sent to Ligny.<sup>25</sup> A short time later the English counterattacked and Ney sent an order to d'Erlon to return immediately.

It was not until 1830 that Napoleon's 1515 dispatch arrived and Ney understood that his sector had been relegated to second priority. In any event, lacking d'Erlon's corps,<sup>26</sup> Ney had no recourse but to settle for a stalemate at Quatre Bras. The French and English ended the day in the same positions they had held in the morning.<sup>27</sup>

While the Emperor was at breakfast on the morning of the 17th, he received confirmation that Wellington was still in position at Quatre Bras and not falling back to protect Brussels as expected. Napoleon decided that the day's aim would be to defeat or drive through the English.<sup>28</sup> He had Soult send a warning order to Ney,<sup>29</sup> then went to Grouchy's headquarters to visit the wounded. Between 1000 and 1100, he learned that the Prussians were massing at Gembloux.

• *Decision Seven.* Three possible courses were now open to Napoleon. He could go after Blücher with the right wing and the reserve, force a second engagement, and complete the work of the previous day, while Ney watched Wellington. Second, the Emperor could leave Grouchy with a skeleton force to maintain contact with Blücher and fall on Wellington with a superior massed force. Finally, he could detach Grouchy with his full complement of 33,000 men to harry Blücher, then mass the remaining 69,000 against Wellington. Because Napoleon remained committed to his strategic intent, the last option—decision seven—was chosen.

Napoleon ordered his reserve to Marbais to support Ney's attack. Next, he dictated letters to Grouchy and Ney. He told Grouchy to pursue the Prussians and determine their intentions.<sup>30</sup> Ney's letter told him to attack the enemy at Quatre Bras and drive him from his positions using the reserve force at Marbais.<sup>31</sup>

The actions assigned to Grouchy parallel the modern principle of *security*. In addition to providing protection from hostile acts of violence, security also includes measures taken to protect against surprise, interference, or any situation that affords the enemy an unexpected advantage.

When Napoleon arrived at Quatre Bras at 1300, he found Ney's troops preparing lunch while Wellington's army was carrying out an unhindered withdrawal.<sup>32</sup> Although the left wing was immediately galvanized into activity, it was not until 1400 that the French were ready to advance; then a colossal thunderstorm burst and the ground became a quagmire. The French could only trail after the English army along the Brussels road. By 1830 Wellington had successfully escaped to a position just beyond the ridge of Mont St. Jean south of Waterloo. Ney's inactivity on the morning of the 17th had again been crucial.

• *Decision Eight.* By early evening Napoleon was sure that Wellington was establishing his army at Mont St. Jean, with the apparent intention of fighting the next day. At 0400 on the 18th, Napoleon received a dispatch from Grouchy reporting that the bulk of the Prussian army was at Wavre. The message concluded, "I shall follow them so as to prevent them gaining Brussels and to separate them from Wellington."<sup>33</sup> Napoleon saw no reason to reply to this message until 1000. Just prior to dictating that reply, Soult advised the immediate recall of Grouchy, believing there could not be too many French troops to face Wellington. This angered Napoleon, who retorted, "Because you have been beaten by Wellington [in the Peninsular campaign] you consider him a good general, but I tell you that Wellington is a *bad* general and the English are breakfast."<sup>34</sup> In addition to refusing Soult's recommendation, the Emperor also declined repositioning Grouchy to better protect the right flank.

The refusal to send revised orders to Grouchy constituted Napoleon's eighth decision. Historians have made much of the reasons for Napoleon taking this stance, since this failure to properly guard against intervention by Blücher also contributed to the French defeat. Based upon the intentions Grouchy expressed in his message, Napoleon's belief that Grouchy's force of 33,000 would hold off the Prussians seems reasonable. However, the Emperor's stubborn refusal coupled with his emotional outburst against Soult lends some credence to suspicions that physical and mental illness interfered with Napoleon's ability to command effectively at Waterloo.<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless, the dispatch Napoleon sent to Grouchy at 1000 reinforced the requirement to maintain contact and to keep the Prussians busy.<sup>36</sup>

The battlefield covered a front of no more than four kilometers, between Paris Wood in the east and the village of Braine l'Alleud in the west. The principal features of the terrain were two low ridges, a little over a kilometer apart. Wellington's defensive positions were on the reverse slopes of the northern ridge, but there were outposts, about 500 meters to the front, at the chateau at Hougomont and the farm at La Haye Sainte. Across the valley, Napoleon's line ran along the south ridge, with the village of La Belle Alliance close behind the center of the ridge. The road from Charleroi to Brussels bisected the English and French positions. Napoleon had 48,950 infantry, 15,765 cavalry, and 7,232 artillerymen with 246 guns—a total of 71,947 men. This was fairly close to Wellington's 67,661, which consisted of 49,608 infantry, 12,408 cavalry, and 5,645 artillerymen with 156 guns.<sup>37</sup>

• *Decision Nine.* On the morning of the 18th, an experienced artillery officer advised Napoleon to postpone his attack for two to three hours because the ground was still too wet to allow the guns to maneuver easily or to employ the ricochet effect of their shots. Napoleon immediately agreed, constituting decision nine: to delay the main assault until 1300. Although this delay seemed reasonable, historians cite it as another prime contributor to the French defeat.<sup>38</sup>



• *Decision Ten.* At about 1100 the Emperor dictated his general attack order, his tenth decision of the campaign. Because of the damp ground, there would not be any fancy maneuvers. The plan called for a single massive frontal offensive supported by the merest handful of preliminary attacks. Some historians assert that the French should have attempted to turn Wellington's right flank rather than indulge in so straightforward an assault, but Napoleon needed a quick victory, and the fast sledgehammer blow had worked successfully in the past. He had a great deal of confidence in his plan, declaring, "We have ninety chances in our favor, and not ten against us."<sup>39</sup>

The attack was a clear example of the tactical application of the principle of *mass*. Napoleon believed that the experience of his troops gave him a clear advantage, despite both armies being about numerically equal. By concentrating superior power against Wellington's line, the Emperor was confident that he would achieve the breakthrough and the decisive results he needed.

At 1136 hours, the French batteries opened fire and a diversionary attack of Hougoumont was launched by a division from Reille's corps with the intention of drawing in Wellington's reserves and weakening the sector of the English line to be attacked. Unfortunately, this action got out of hand and lasted well into the middle of the afternoon.

At about 1300, as d'Erlon's corps was preparing to begin its assault, a Prussian force was spotted entering the Paris Wood. They were identified as Bülow's corps. Two light cavalry divisions and Lobau's corps were sent from the reserve to hold Bülow in check and secure the right flank. Orders were then sent for Grouchy's recall.

At 1330 Ney began his attack. D'Erlon's corps advanced with some success on their right, but could not clear La Haye Sainte on their left. Their momentum exhausted, they were taken in the flank by English cavalry and were thrown back down the slope of the English position. The English broke through the attackers and plunged toward the French central battery, but French lancers and cuirassiers drove them off.

However, the English had resisted the first assault, and the battlefield quieted until 1500 except for the fighting at Hougoumont. About this time Napoleon received an 1130 dispatch from Grouchy, revealing his position and making it clear that there was no hope of his reaching Napoleon during the day.<sup>40</sup>

• *Decision Eleven.* Napoleon now had two options. He could call off the battle and regroup to attack again on the next day or at a later date. Or he could fling everything he had in hand against Wellington in the hope of destroying him before significant Prussian assistance arrived. Since the initial assault had left the English no better off than the French, Napoleon saw no reason to retire, and thus decision eleven was to continue the battle.

Reasoning that the key to Wellington's position was La Haye Sainte, Napoleon ordered Ney to take it at any cost. If he could next take the farm at



**In this painting by E. Chaperon, Marshal Ney rallies the 95th Infantry: "Come and see how a marshal of France dies."**

Mont St. Jean, he would be able to cut off the English line of retreat and block any Prussian assistance.

Because of various problems, Ney was able to attack with only two brigades. Although they were repulsed, Ney thought he saw the beginning of a retreat in the English rear. Ney immediately ordered Milhaud's two divisions forward; Charles Lefebvre-Desnouettes' division instinctively followed the forward movement. As a result, 5,000 horsemen were thrown into the fray prematurely.

During all this, Bülow's corps moved out of the Paris Wood and by 1700 had taken Plancenoit. Napoleon sent the Young Guard to assist Lobau's corps in retaking it. The Emperor's central reserve was dwindling fast.

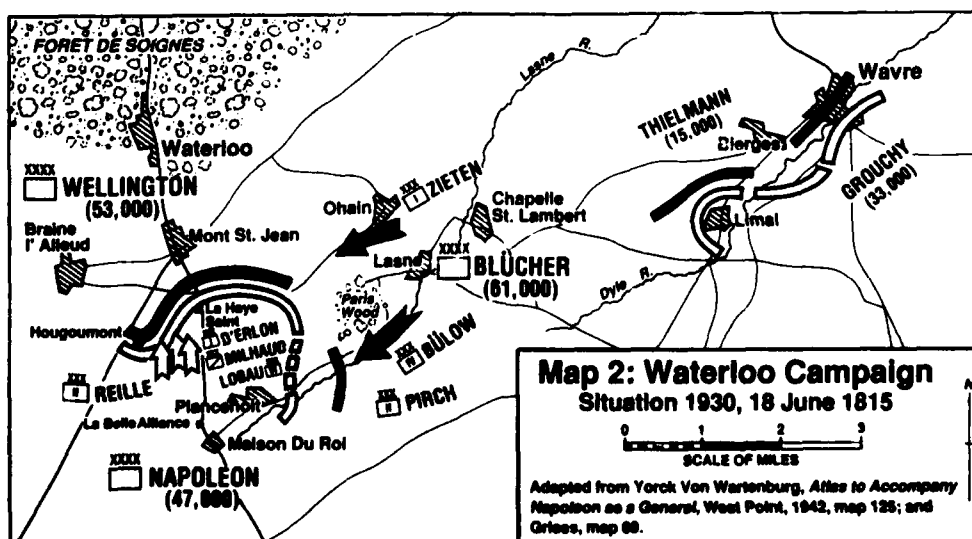
Meanwhile, Ney's charge of 5,000 cavalry had resulted in exposed horsemen milling about the English line. To extricate Ney's cavalry, Napoleon

ordered some of the cavalry reserve forward. This movement got out of hand, causing a second massed cavalry charge which overcrowded the field with horsemen. Realizing that the cavalry charges had failed, Ney committed two divisions of Reille's corps at 1800. Eventually La Haye Sainte fell to a combined attack of infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Ney then called for additional troops to exploit his success.

• *Decision Twelve.* Napoleon rejected Ney's appeal, saying, "Troops! Where do you expect me to get them? Do you expect me to make them?"<sup>41</sup> Lord Chalfont, echoing the conclusions of several historians, called this the critical moment of the Waterloo campaign: "Had Napoleon agreed to send in the Guard, then the battle might well have been won."<sup>42</sup> Not to do so became decision twelve.

But the decision was more than just a refusal to reinforce Ney. Napoleon was choosing instead to protect his right flank and rear because the Young Guard had been thrown out of Plancenoit again. Of the 14 Guard battalions available to him, Napoleon formed 11 into as many squares and posted them east of the Brussels road facing Plancenoit. He kept one battalion to guard his headquarters and sent the remaining two to retake Plancenoit, which they did. However, the time spent stabilizing the French right flank had given Wellington a half hour of grace in which to strengthen his defensive line.<sup>43</sup>

• *Decision Thirteen.* The moment had arrived for decision thirteen. Many historians have maintained that at this point, about 1900 hours, Napoleon should have withdrawn his army while it was still intact. But retreat was not in his concept of warfighting. "In a retreat," he said, "besides the honor of the army, a command often loses more men than in two battles."<sup>44</sup> Moreover, he had little choice but to continue the battle. In spite of his best efforts of the previous three days, the English and Prussians were completing their junction; other allied



armies were fast coming up to aid them in a march on Paris.<sup>45</sup> A victory at Waterloo appeared to be Napoleon's only alternative to absolute ruin. In his mind, the moment to snatch success was at hand. "The fate of a battle is the result of a single instant," he wrote. "The decisive moment comes, a moral spark is lighted, and the smallest reserve accomplishes victory."<sup>46</sup>

At 1900, Napoleon personally took forward four to eight battalions of the Guard (accounts vary) and turned them over to Ney to crack the English center. The elite Imperial Guard, which had never failed in an attack, moved forward and assaulted. Wellington's troops met them as they reached the crest of the ridge, and fierce hand-to-hand fighting ensued.

By 2000, Blücher's main force arrived to alter decisively the balance of strength. At about 2015, Wellington ordered a general advance, and the French were crushed between the converging allied forces.<sup>47</sup> Realizing failure, Napoleon fled from the battlefield, leaving behind the shattered remains of his army.<sup>48</sup> He arrived in Paris on the morning of 21 June and on the following day abdicated for the last time. A "single instant" had indeed decided the fate of Waterloo, but that instant was not Napoleon's.

**W**hat had caused the total defeat of one of history's greatest commanders? Aside from selecting ill-suited subordinates, Napoleon's initial decisions had been flawless. His campaign strategy and the undetected concentration of his army near Belgium are judged by many historians as brilliant. Surely, his defeat was not the result of misapplication of the fundamental concepts of warfighting; throughout the campaign he applied the soundest principles of warfare. Thus his decisionmaking rates high marks.

Yet on the 18th, Napoleon seemed to commit a series of mistakes that sealed his doom. The biographer William Milligan Sloane summed up that performance in a nutshell: "He began too late; he did not follow up his assaults; he did not retreat when beaten; he could attend to only one thing at a time; he failed in control of his subordinates; he was neither calm nor alert."<sup>49</sup> More than anything else, Napoleon's defeat stemmed from his failures in controlling the time-space factor, a necessity of leadership which he had preached repeatedly. As American historian John Elting points out, "His greatest defeats came from his failures to follow his own teachings."<sup>50</sup>

At the core of those teachings was Napoleon's concept of the Principles of War. Consequently, to the student of military art and science, Napoleon's exploits are most instructive when the modern equivalent of those principles are used as the yardstick for measuring his performance. Napoleon himself would have probably agreed with this notion: it was he who once wrote, "All the great generals . . . have been successful only by adapting themselves to these rules, whatever in other ways the boldness of their undertakings and the extent of their operations may have been."<sup>51</sup>

## NOTES

1. Like the armed forces of most nations, the US Army has evolved its own version of such principles. Today's Army recognizes nine principles: objective, offensive, mass, economy of force, maneuver, unity of command, security, surprise, and simplicity. US Department of the Army, *Operations*, FM 100-5 (Washington: GPO, 1986), p. 173.

2. Many historians claim that Napoleon denied the existence of any group of concepts such as the Principles of War. His statement, "There are no precise or determined rules," is often cited. (*La Correspondence de Napoléon Ier* [Paris: Henri Plan, 1858-70], XXXI, 365.) They point out that rather than principles, Napoleon believed the key to battlefield success lay solely with the genius of the commander. "He alone," Napoleon wrote, "by his will and superior insight can conquer and overcome all difficulties." (*Correspondence*, XXIX, 341.) However, another statement by Napoleon may more clearly portray his beliefs about the relationship between the genius of the commander and the use of warfighting principles. He wrote, "All the great generals . . . accomplished their great deeds by obeying the rules and principles of the art, that is to say, by the correctness of their combinations and a careful balancing of means and results, efforts and obstacles." (*Maximes* [Paris: 1874], no. CXII.) In fact, Napoleon had hoped to compile these principles. He said, "If one day I can find the time, I will write a book in which I will describe the principles of war in so precise a manner that they will be at the disposal of all soldiers, so that war can be learnt as easily as a science." (Maréchal Gouvion Saint-Cyr, *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire Militaire sous la Directoire, le Consulat et l'Empire* [Paris: n.p., 1829], IV, 149.)

3. Wellington's so-called English army was a heterogeneous Anglo-Dutch mix. About a third were British troops, most of whom had never been under fire; another third were Dutch-Belgians who had been serving under Napoleon little more than a year before; the rest were Hanoverians, Brunswickers, and about 6,000 men of George III's German Legion. Lord Chalfont, ed., *Waterloo: Battle of Three Armies* (New York: Knopf, 1980), p. 10.

4. Napoleon is quoted as saying, "I think like Frederick, one should always be the first to attack." General G. Gourgaud, *Journal de Sainte Hélène* (Paris: n.p., 1899), II, 336.

5. In a political pamphlet called *Le Souper de Beaucaire* which Napoleon published in 1793, he wrote, "In the art of war it is an axiom that he who remains in his trenches will be beaten: experience and theory are in accord with this." In J. F. C. Fuller, *The Conduct of War 1789-1961* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1961), p. 52.

6. Napoleon is quoted as saying in 1797, "There are in Europe many good generals, but they see too many things at once. I see only one thing, namely the enemy's main body. I try to crush it, confident that secondary matters will then settle themselves." In David G. Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), p. 141.

7. For example, Fuller said that these appointments "were the most fatal of all the errors Napoleon committed during the Hundred Days, and it is no exaggeration to say that they were the chief cause of his defeat." J. F. C. Fuller, *A Military History of the Western World* (New York: Funk, 1955), II, 495.

8. Ney's left wing was comprised of d'Erlon's I Corps (19,939 men) and Reille's II Corps (24,361 men).

9. Napoleon may have intended a calculated blow against Louis XVIII's prestige by reemploying the Bourbon's former commander-in-chief. Like Soult, Ney's selection might also have persuaded other former servants of the Bourbons that their desertion of Napoleon in 1814 could be overlooked in return for renewed service to the Emperor's cause. Chandler, p. 1022.

10. Grouchy's right wing was comprised of Vandamme's III Corps (19,160 men) and Gérard's IV Corps (15,995 men).

11. Méneval, a member of Napoleon's staff, said of him, "He took not only the initiative in thought, but also attended personally to the detail of every piece of business. . . . [H]is genius, superhuman in its activity, carried him away; he felt he possessed the means and the time to manage everything. . . . [I]t was he who did everything." *Mémoires*, III, 50-51.

12. This force included the four corps of the two wings and Lobau's VI Corps (10,465 men) assigned to the reserve.

13. The Imperial Guard was the *corps d'élite* of the army. Originally it sprang from the personal escort of General Bonaparte, to which were added selected members of the Guards of the Directory and the Legislative Assembly. At the time of Waterloo its strength was 25,870 soldiers. The Guard comprised three distinct sections. The Old Guard (the original nucleus) consisted of foot grenadiers (infantry), *grenadiers à cheval* (heavy cavalry), dragoons (cavalry capable of fighting mounted or on foot), lancers (light cavalry), Mamelukes (cavalry of Oriental and Turkish descent), *gendarmes d'élites* (Emperor's bodyguard), Marines of the Guard (used for river operations), gunners, and sappers (engineers). The Middle Guard had been added in 1806 and was made up of fusiliers (infantry) regiments to which were eventually added two regiments of flankers (gamekeepers), noted as crack

shots. In 1809 the Young Guard was founded, comprised of light infantry, *voltigeurs* (infantry capable of running as fast as horses), and *tirailleurs* (skirmishers).

14. A security ban was imposed on the frontier area starting 7 June. As operational forces were moved from frontier positions, their places were discreetly filled by National Guardsmen. Civilian traffic was carefully controlled, the mails suspended, and fishing boats were ordered to keep port.

15. Wellington did not learn of Napoleon's invasion until the Englishman was informed while having supper on the 15th with the Duke of Richmond in Brussels. They went into the study to examine a map. Wellington said, "Napoleon has humbugged me, by G— ! He has gained twenty-four hours march on me." When Richmond asked what he intended to do, Wellington replied, "I have [will ?] ordered the army to concentrate at Quatre Bras; but we will not stop him there, and if so, I must fight him here (at the same time passing his thumb-nail over the position of Waterloo)." Quoted in Fuller, *History*, II, 503.

16. The historian Edward Creasy believed that the protection of Brussels was justly considered by the allied generals to be a matter of primary importance: "If Napoleon could, either by manoeuvring or fighting, have succeeded in occupying that city, the greater part of Belgium would unquestionably have declared in his favour; and the results of such a success, gained by the Emperor at the commencement of the campaign, might have decisively influenced the whole after-current of events." Edward S. Creasy, *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 1960), p. 397.

17. *Correspondence*, XXVIII, 291.

18. Blücher was 73 years old and had received many decorations and honors from all over Europe. Known as the "Red Hussar," he was intemperate and illiterate, but made up for what he lacked in formal military education by fiery zeal and courage.

19. The orders that Soult sent to Ney said, "His Majesty's intention is that you shall attack whatever force is before you, and after vigorously driving it back, you will turn in our direction, so as to bring about the envelopment of those enemy troops which I have already mentioned to you [i.e. Blücher]." Marshal M. Ney, *Documents inédits du Duc d'Elchingen* (Paris: n.p., 1833), p. 40.

20. Napoleon had 68,000 troops deployed; Blücher had brought his number up to 84,000. Fuller, *History*, p. 507.

21. The message that Napoleon had Soult send to Ney read in part, "His Majesty desires me to tell you that you are to maneuver immediately in such a manner as to envelop the enemy's right and fall upon his rear; the fate of France is in your hands. Thus do not hesitate even for a moment to carry out the maneuver ordered . . . so as to cooperate in a victory that may well turn out to be decisive." Ney, p. 42.

22. The casualties of the Prussians in killed, wounded, and captured amounted to about 16,000 and those of the French to between 11,000 and 12,000. Fuller, *History*, p. 509.

23. What Napoleon did not know was that, although the Prussian center had been shattered, both wings remained relatively intact and extricated themselves in an orderly manner. Elting points out that in the darkness it was impossible to tell which road the Prussian elements took. (John R. Elting, *Swords Around a Throne: Napoleon's Grand Armée* [New York: Free Press, 1988], p. 539.) The retreat was not directed toward Liège as expected, but rather towards Wavre to maintain contact with Wellington in accordance with the original allied plan. This was to have dire consequences for Napoleon two days later when the Prussian army was able to reinforce the English.

24. The apparent validity of Napoleon's decision was confirmed the next morning at 0700 when he learned that a cavalry unit of Grouchy's reported an 0400 observation of the enemy in full retreat on Liège. Actually, the cavalry squadron had come across thousands of Prussian deserters fleeing from Ligny.

25. This was the mispositioned column that appeared on Napoleon's left flank at 1800 and caused the one-hour delay in the Emperor's executing his master stroke against Blücher.

26. Because of the confusion in communications, d'Erlon eventually returned to Quatre Bras without seeing any action for the day. His 20,000 men probably could have ensured a total French victory on either battlefield.

27. The casualties were also about equal, between 4,000 and 5,000 on either side. Fuller, *History*, p. 514.

28. Like Napoleon, Wellington was 46 years old, but was a man of very different breeding and temperament. The "Iron Duke" was as autocratic and dictatorial as Napoleon, but seldom let his imagination run away with his reason. As a strategist he was cautious, steady, and reliable rather than brilliant, and his tactical forte was defense. He encouraged the enemy to attack and, when the enemy was in confusion from the smoke of his muskets, Wellington counterattacked. Also like Napoleon, Wellington did not rely on secondhand information, but tried to see everything for himself.

29. The message said in part, "You should take up your position at Quatre Bras; but if this is impossible . . . send information immediately. . . . If, on the contrary, there is only a rearguard, attack it and seize the position. . . . Today it is necessary to end this operation." Ney, pp. 45-47.

30. In the message to Grouchy, Napoleon told him, "Pursue the enemy. Explore his march and instruct me respecting his manoeuvres, so that I may be able to penetrate what he is intending to do. . . . It is important

to penetrate what the enemy is intending to do." In John Codman Ropes, *The Campaign of Waterloo: A Military History* (New York: Scribner's, 1892), pp. 209-10.

31. The letter to Ney said in part, "His Majesty has directed me to inform you that his intention is that you are to attack the enemy at Quatre Bras and drive him from his position and that the force which is at Marbais will second your operations." Ney, pp. 44-45.

32. Upon learning that Blücher had been defeated at Ligny, Wellington decided to change his course of action. It was obvious that Napoleon's main army would now be directed against the English and a retreat was inevitable. After assuring himself that the Prussian army had retired upon Wavre without French pursuit, Wellington resolved to pull his army back toward Brussels to cover that city, halt on line with Wavre, and restore communication with Blücher. Creasy, p. 407.

33. In Chandler, p. 1063.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 1007-08.

35. Lord Chalfont (see p. 10) best summarized the controversy over Napoleon's health, saying, "Most historians are of the opinion that he was in poor health. Following the best traditions of the subjective historical approach, different accounts, depending upon the individual author's general opinion of Napoleon, have suggested that he was suffering from piles, cystitis, hepatitis, and venereal disease. . . . Napoleon was almost certainly suffering . . . from the appalling pains of the duodenal-pyloric cancer which was eventually to kill him." At the other extreme, General Fuller said, "Such evidence that has been raked up in support of these contentions is as forced as it is distorted; for he was no better or worse than he had been at Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, and Leipzig." Fuller, *History*, p. 492.

36. The message to Grouchy said, "His Majesty desires that you will head for Wavre in order to draw near to us, and to place yourself in touch with our operations, and to keep up your communications with us, pushing before you those portions of the Prussian army which have taken this direction and which have halted at Wavre." In Chandler, p. 1067.

37. Fuller, *History*, p. 524. To these figures, Charles King adds the strength that Blücher brought to the field: 41,283 infantry, 8,858 cavalry, and 1,803 artillerymen—totaling 51,944 men and 104 guns. He says that the significance of this was that during the day Napoleon would have to "face and fight 119,000 men and 260 guns." Charles King, *Famous and Decisive Battles of the World* (Caskey, 1905), p. 30.

38. Chandler says it was the most fatal mistake of the day "for had even an inadequately supported infantry attack been launched against Wellington during the morning, the French would surely have won; for Blücher would have been too late arriving on the field to affect the issue" (p. 1067).

39. *Ibid.*

40. During the course of the day, Grouchy had been slow in moving his men during the morning, refused suggestions to march toward the sound of the guns at Waterloo (which might have saved the French cause), and fought an indecisive action against a single Prussian corps at Wavre. To his credit when he was eventually ordered to retreat, Grouchy was able to fall back to Givet skillfully and safely.

41. Ney, p. 18.

42. Chalfont, p. 19.

43. In the hour following the fall of La Haye Sainte, a second Prussian corps, under Zieten, had begun to arrive on the English left. This made it possible for Wellington to move infantry and cavalry from his left to reinforce his center.

44. In Daniel Savage Gray, trans. and comp., *In The Words of Napoleon: A Collection of Quotations of Napoleon Bonaparte* (Troy, Ala.: Troy State Univ. Press, 1977), p. 81.

45. Napoleon anticipated that by July, Schwarzenberg's 210,000 Austrians could attack the upper reaches of the Rhine. At this same time, Frimont with 75,000 more Austrians and Italians could advance onto the Riviera and threaten Lyons. Shortly thereafter, Barclay de Tolly's 150,000 Russians could be in the central Rhine area. When all these forces were assembled, a simultaneous drive on Paris and Lyons could grind down the balance of the French forces between converging armies. Chandler, p. 1015.

46. Jules Bertaut, ed., *Napoleon Bonaparte: Virilités: Maximes et Pensées* (Paris: n.p., c. 1912), p. 184.

47. The total losses in killed and wounded are estimated to have been: Wellington 15,100; Blücher 7,000; Napoleon 25,000, to which must be added some 8,000 captured and 220 guns. Fuller, *History*, p. 540.

48. Napoleon was still not acknowledging defeat. On the 19th he wrote to his brother Joseph, "All is not lost. . . . When I reassemble my forces I shall have 150,000 men. [Then the] National Guard . . . will provide 100,000 . . . and the regimental depots another 50,000. . . . But people must help me, not deafen me with advice." In Maurice Hutt, ed., *Napoleon* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice, 1972), p. 66-67.

49. William Milligan Sloane, *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* (New York: Century, 1915), p. 213.

50. Elting, p. 529.

51. *Maximes*, no. CXII.

# Spain's Security Policy and Army in the 1990s

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For nearly a decade, Spanish political elites and public opinion have been debating security policy in a welcome demonstration of the robustness of democratic institutions. In time, membership in the Atlantic Alliance, the continued security partnership with the United States, and participation in West European defense cooperation—via the Western European Union and the Independent European Program Group—have been settled to the satisfaction of all parties. Of course, such progress has not come without difficult compromises, such as the withdrawal from Spanish territory of the US Air Force 401st Tactical Fighter Wing and Spain's acceptance of nuclear deterrence as the core concept of Western strategy.<sup>1</sup> The Spanish Government's "Decalogue" on security policy, first formulated in 1984, has been brought to a successful conclusion.

But while Spain's formal security policy debate has run its course, security policy in Spain has become "trivialized" and the debate self-perpetuating. The more Spanish security policy became internationalized in the 1980s, in connection with membership in NATO and the Western European Union (WEU), the more it became a matter of local politics and a societal issue. Witness the controversy over the air force bombing range at Anchuras, the residual public hostility to a US military presence in Spain, the political debate over conscription, and the concern in the military establishment regarding the future place of the armed forces in Spanish society.<sup>2</sup>

Presumably, as Spaniards get accustomed to being full-fledged citizens of Europe—and the completion of the European Community's "internal market" on 1 January 1993 ("Europe 1992") will undoubtedly accelerate the process—they will come to accept as normal what has been standard practice for 40 years in neighboring countries (including France): that an effective national defense



posture implies a collective defense effort; that the latter requires national defense planning to be adjusted to the scale of Western Europe; and, therefore, that the common security afforded by Western membership in alliances such as NATO and the WEU implies the sharing of its burdens, including the presence of foreign troops, the regular use by allied forces of military facilities located on Spanish territory for purposes of NATO training, the participation by Spanish military formations in bi- and multilateral exercises within and beyond Spain's "zone of strategic interest," and so on.

The internationalization of Spain's security policy and, increasingly, defense posture—which is influencing virtually every aspect of Spanish defense planning, from command arrangements and force structures to armaments procurement—is likely to be further accelerated by still another external factor—arms control—which until recently had been almost totally foreign to Spanish defense planning. Spain is a participant in the negotiations on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) currently underway in Vienna, and its territory is situated, according to the NATO proposal, within the so-called "4-1 zone" encompassing the Iberian peninsula. Not surprisingly, NATO's proposal is crafted in such a way as to preserve the alliance's collective combat potential in central Europe (the so-called "4-4 zone") opposite the Warsaw Pact's greatest concentration of forces, whereas the Pact's proposal would dilute NATO forces in central Europe. The two proposals have substantially different implications for Spanish forces in terms of collective force reductions across the five weapon categories addressed by the CFE negotiations: main battle tanks, armored troop carriers, field artillery, combat helicopters, and combat aircraft.<sup>3</sup>

Any reductions in Spanish army and air force holdings as a result of a CFE agreement in Vienna could help defuse residual domestic political opposition to Spanish membership in NATO by demonstrating the usefulness of alliance membership as a vehicle for Spanish participation in collective disarmament. They might also ease budgetary pressures on the procurement of new military equipment. But they are also likely to give a new impetus to the lingering debate over the wisdom of abandoning conscription in favor of an all-volunteer army in the context of a reorganization of the Spanish army into a smaller, more mobile, and better-equipped body of forces.

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### ***The Contemporary Spanish Army***

The modern Spanish army has undergone two reorganizations, in 1965 and in the early 1980s. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the latter may have been a necessary, transitional step toward the kind of army that West European nations (at least those belonging to the WEU) could be forced to adopt in the wake of a CFE agreement and its sequels. This new model army might include a larger proportion of armored cavalry and motorized infantry units, equipped with wheeled armored fighting vehicles, as well as airmobile and air-transportable forces.

The 1965 reorganization of the Spanish army—a milestone in its development into a relatively modern force—superimposed a mobile strategic reserve force (*Fuerzas de Intervencion Inmediata*), with a limited capability to deploy across Spanish territory, over a territorial defense structure (*Defensa Operativa del Territorio*), structured as a spiderweb linking Madrid to nine regional military headquarters. The strategic reserve comprised an army corps headquarters maintained in cadre status in peacetime, several separate brigade- and regiment-size units (including a parachute brigade, an air-transportable brigade, an armored cavalry brigade and a corps-level field artillery brigade), and three divisions (one armored, one mechanized, one motorized). The territorial defense forces in turn were composed of nine home-defense brigades (one per military region), one mobile infantry brigade, two mountain divisions deployed in the Pyrenees, and the garrisons in the Balearic and Canary islands and in the North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.<sup>4</sup>

The 1965 structure was influenced to a considerable degree by the French army, which, having just withdrawn from Algeria, was itself planning a major reorganization of its forces stationed in France and in the Federal Republic of Germany. Between 1963 and 1967, the French army was reorganized into three bodies of forces: the First French Army for operations in Central Europe; territorial defense forces; and forces for overseas intervention.<sup>5</sup> There is certainly an intriguing parallel between the French territorial defense forces, structured into seven military regions, and the Spanish version, structured into nine military regions. French military thinking has also influenced its Iberian neighbor, with writings by Generals de Gaulle, Gallois, Beaufre, and others being standard texts among Spanish army officers. Also, bilateral relations between the French and Spanish armies have been particularly close since the early 1960s, involving such cooperative efforts as the annual combined exercises, nicknamed *Galia* and *Iberia*, between the French 11th Airborne Division and the Spanish Parachute Brigade, and procurement by the Spanish army of the French AMX-30 tank (about which the Spaniards, like the Greeks, have expressed some misgivings).<sup>6</sup>

But despite the intent of modernizing the Spanish army, through the creation of the strategic reserve and the procurement of US-designed equipment such as M-48 main battle tanks, M-113 armored personnel carriers, and

M-108 self-propelled howitzers, it remained essentially a static garrison force with a very slow peacetime tempo of operations. Only the long-drawn-out war in the Spanish Sahara provided officers with the opportunity to escape from the monotony of military life in the metropole. The existence of separate ministries for each of the three services precluded effective cooperation, and joint exercises were rare. And while the Spanish navy and air force had been exposed to NATO operational concepts and procedures well before Spain joined the alliance—as a result of their regular participation in exercises with US and French forces—the army remained virtually isolated from any such cooperation. Not until 1979, on the occasion of the bilateral exercise *Crisex 79*, did Spanish army formations train with US forces. Against this background, the reorganization of the Spanish army initiated in 1984 represents a conceptual and operational turning point in the postwar evolution of the army. The resulting plan introduced a number of important innovations:

- Abandonment of the former distinction between the strategic reserve and the territorial defense units in favor of a single, streamlined body of forces. One consequence of this measure was the disbanding of the nine home-defense brigades, bringing the frontline strength of the Spanish army from the 1965 total of 24 brigades down to the present 15.

- Reduction in the number of military regions from nine to six and establishment of three major logistical commands in Madrid, Seville, and Zaragoza.

- Consolidation of 11 brigades into five divisions: one armored, one motorized, one mechanized, and two mountain divisions. All have two brigades except for the mechanized division, which has three.

The remaining four brigades (two armored cavalry, one air-transportable, and one parachute) are separate and can operate independently. Additional units continue to include the garrisons in the Balearic and Canary islands and in the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, the Spanish Legion, the army's light aviation corps, and several smaller commands directly subordinated to the army staff.<sup>7</sup>

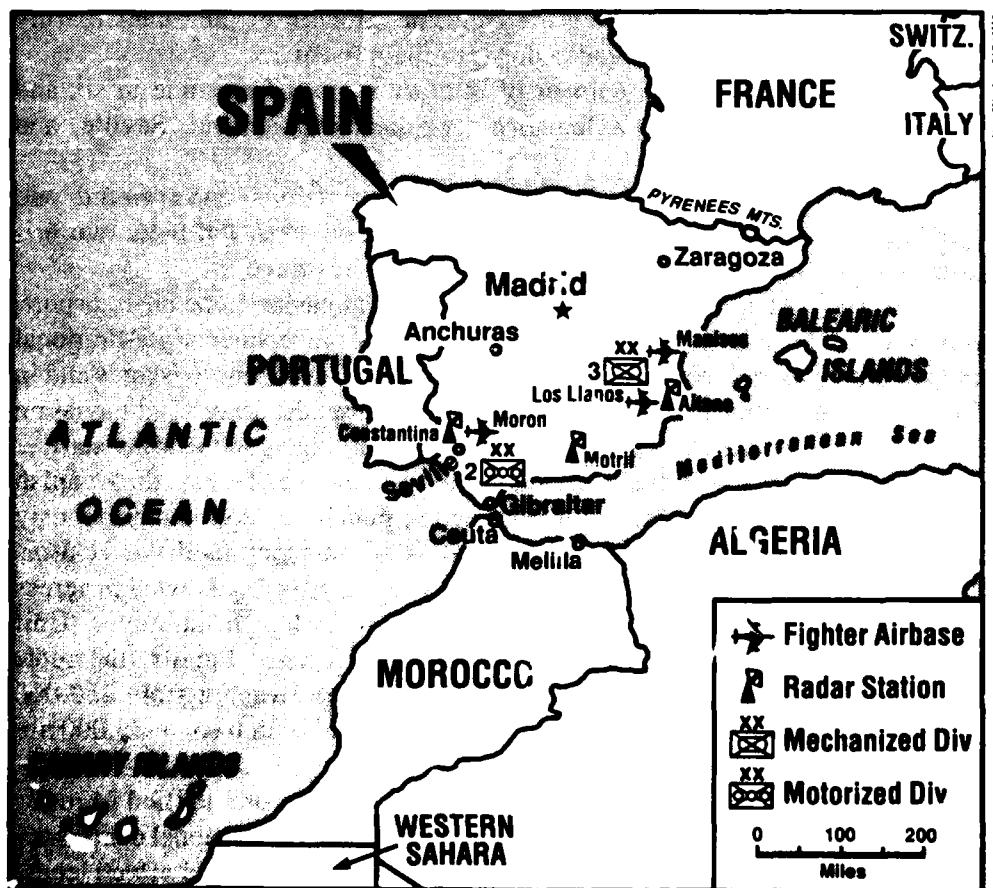
In parallel with the reorganization of maneuver forces, the Spanish army has launched an ambitious infrastructure plan to consolidate previously scattered units into several large, brigade-size garrison facilities. Unfortunately, delays and budgetary constraints have considerably slowed progress and only a handful of such units are stationed in modern installations. Unit readiness and cohesion are thereby adversely affected.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the reorganization has involved a reduction in overall Army strength from 250,000 men in 1965 to approximately 200,000 men today (of which some 35,000 are volunteers and 165,000 are draftees).<sup>9</sup>

The emergence of genuine jointness in the form of a unified Ministry of Defense and Joint Staff and the establishment of major operational commands for each service have had a profound effect on the readiness and effectiveness

of the armed forces by emphasizing common employment concepts and interoperability.<sup>10</sup> This is particularly so for the once operationally isolated army. The conduct of joint operations with elements from all three services was first tested on a large scale in 1985, during exercise *Tartesos 85* on the Spanish mainland, and again in 1989, during exercise *Canarex 89* in the Canary archipelago.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Spain and NATO: Convergence or Compromise?***

At the very time the Spanish army was carrying forth an extensive internal reorganization intended to bring it on a par with other West European armies, the development of Spain's first joint strategic plan and Spain's membership in NATO placed the army in a totally new operational context. The joint strategic plan, anchored on a strategic axis extending from the Canary Islands to the west through the Gibraltar Straits to the Balearic Islands to the east, pulls the Spanish army's center of gravity in the Iberian Peninsula toward North Africa. Membership in NATO, even if outside the alliance's integrated military structure, naturally drives the Spanish army to look toward continental Europe.



The joint strategic plan identifies two main threats: a menace from the Warsaw Pact, which Spain shares with the other NATO member nations, and a menace specific to Spain which originates in North Africa.<sup>12</sup> The former is seen as the most dangerous but also more remote, while the latter is relatively less serious but more probable. The stationing of two of the Spanish army's three heavy divisions—the motorized division and the mechanized—and the concentration of airbases (Moron, Los Llanos, and Manises) and early warning radar stations in southeastern Spain reportedly conforms with the joint strategic plan's preferential emphasis on North African contingencies (see map). The establishment of a new armored cavalry brigade and a new fighter wing at Zaragoza—equipped with the latest F-18 fighters—suggests, however, that European contingencies are not being ignored.

NATO's endorsement of the missions proposed by the Spanish government to the alliance in January 1988—all of them centered, to some degree or another, on the Iberian Peninsula—undoubtedly represents a tacit acceptance by the allies of the central Spanish defense concept embodied in the Balearic/Canary islands axis, even if for good measure the axis has been expanded to encompass the entire Iberian Peninsula and not merely the Gibraltar Straits.<sup>13</sup> And to that extent, the NATO missions which the Spanish armed forces may undertake in times of tension or war comfort the Spanish navy and air force in their role as the linchpin of Spanish defenses as well as the primary instruments of Spain's contribution to the common defense.<sup>14</sup>

However, the formulation of a Spanish "zone of strategic interest," extending well beyond the Balearic/Canary islands axis, and Spain's commitment to its WEU partners to assist them militarily in the defense of *their* borders in case of aggression, places the role of the army in Spanish defense planning in a new light. The tacit acceptance by the allies of the Balearic/Canary islands axis as the center of gravity of Spanish air and maritime operations would entail a corresponding tacit acceptance by Spain of the possibility, in times of tension or war, of projecting power forward—including Spanish ground forces—into and even beyond the Spanish zone of strategic interest.<sup>15</sup> The participation of a Spanish navy carrier task group in the NATO maritime exercise *Sharp Spear 89* in the eastern Atlantic illustrates such a possibility, even though it does not in itself constitute a commitment to do so in wartime. Formally, Spain like France reserves for itself the decision of how its military forces might be employed in support of the common defense. Thus, the peculiar but pragmatic military relationship established between Spain and NATO would owe less to political compromise than to strategic convergence.

### ***NATO, WEU, and CFE***

Such factors as the long-term defense planning imperatives of NATO membership, the WEU commitment to defend forward, and the impending CFE

force reductions may combine to drive the Spanish army toward a smaller, more versatile force, configured for strategic movement (by road, rail, air, and sea) across Spanish territory as well as into continental Europe. Already, following the examples of the French *Force d'Action Rapide* and the Italian *Forza d'Intervento Rapido*, the Spanish army has been developing its own concept of a rapid-reaction force (*Fuerza de Intervención Rápida*, itself part of a larger joint-service rapid-intervention force (*Fuerza de Acción Rápida*) directly subordinated to the Chief of the Defense Staff.<sup>16</sup> An ad hoc, task force-oriented rapid-reaction force—combining elements of the parachute brigade, the Spanish Legion, army aviation, the naval infantry, the navy, and the air force—was tested for the first time in 1988 during exercise *Firex 88*.<sup>17</sup>

Although there is too much uncertainty involved at this time in attempting to predict with confidence the future shape of NATO's conventional defense posture in the wake of a still hypothetical follow-on CFE agreement, given that an initial CFE agreement has yet to be secured in Vienna, it is not too early to speculate on the operational features that could characterize allied ground forces in the next decade and beyond. A lower density of in-place, forward-deployed forces in the Federal Republic of Germany (or the western regions of a unified Germany) in peacetime may place a premium upon the development of highly maneuverable armored cavalry, motorized infantry, and airmobile forces, capable of intra-continental rapid deployment over long distances.

The likely transition of the Soviet army to a force of smaller, strategically mobile, logistically self-contained combined-arms units, as well as the emergence of potential military threats on the southern periphery of Western Europe, also militates for the development of allied units with the capability to deploy on short notice to anywhere in Western Europe.<sup>18</sup> Such units already exist in the shape of the French army's 4th Airmobile Division, 6th Light Armored Division, and 9th Marine Division, as well as the British army's 2d Infantry Division. Others are in the process of forming, such as the Franco-German brigade and the Italian army's new motorized brigades.<sup>19</sup> By consolidating its wheeled armored fighting vehicles within an armored cavalry brigade and a motorized infantry brigade and converting its air-transportable brigade into a heliborne unit akin to the British army's new 24th Airmobile Brigade, the Spanish army could give its fledgling rapid-reaction force a genuine rapid deployment capability and substantial combat power for a relatively modest investment.

The proliferation among the armies of WEU member nations of relatively similar rapid deployment units would encourage the harmonization of force structures and the development of common operational procedures in order to facilitate combined operations, should governments decide to exercise such an option in a crisis.<sup>20</sup> The expanding network of rapid transit highways and railways in Western Europe, including Spain, represents a strategic mobility bonus which should be exploited.<sup>21</sup> In the instance of Spain,

this would argue for strategically positioning its rapid-reaction units equipped with wheeled armored fighting vehicles along highways.

But light, rapidly deployable land forces are not a panacea. They generally have little staying power and are thus not well configured to mount a firm defense or perform counterattacks to repel an invading force. Wherever Spain may decide to meet a hypothetical aggression—east or west of the Rhine, north or south of the Pyrenees, north or south of the Gibraltar Straits—the Spanish army will still need a corps-size armored force using tracked vehicles, though, admittedly, not necessarily as large as the present three heavy divisions.

Thus, a light rapid-reaction force and a heavier, corps-size armored force—some nine to ten brigades total, to which would be added two mountain brigades—could represent an optimized force structure goal. Ideally, brigades belonging to the rapid-reaction force and to the corps would be compatible, in order to permit the creation of force packages configured to the requirements of specific contingencies. The five existing divisional headquarters could be disbanded, to accommodate manpower and budgetary constraints, in favor of a corps/brigade structure. And, in this remodeled Spanish army, a larger role might be given to professional soldiers and to conscripts voluntarily serving for some two years, on the model of the French army.

The convergence of mutual defense commitments, CFE force reductions, and ever-present budgetary and manpower constraints will probably accelerate the internationalization of Spain's security policy. It is a virtually irreversible process. The prospect of a comprehensive conventional arms control regime in Europe requires that NATO members anticipate the long-term defense planning implications of such a regime, and nowhere is the need greater than among allied land forces.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, the prospect of a relatively more fluid European security landscape, with lower force densities at the line of contact between the two opposing alliances, and chronic instability in the Mediterranean basin militate for the development of power-projection capabilities versatile enough for war prevention in Europe and for out-of-area crisis management.

#### NOTES

The author wishes to thank the Spanish Strategic Studies Group (GEES) for its assistance in the preparation of this article.

1. For useful background information on the various dimensions of the Spanish security policy debate in the 1980s, particularly in regard to Spain's membership in NATO, see *España dentro de la Alianza Atlántica* (Madrid: Instituto de Cuestiones Internacionales, 1986); a long series of articles published in *El País* between 16 and 25 February 1986; and Gregory F. Treverton, *Spain: Domestic Politics and Security Policy*, Adelphi Paper 204 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Spring 1986).

2. Marife Moreno, "Anchuras, un blanco difícil," *El País*, 24 July 1989; Juan Mendez, "Protesta en Morón contra la ampliación de la base militar," *El País*, 4 December 1989; Harry Debelius, "Spanish youth wooed with draft alternatives," *The Times*, 11 October 1989; and Miguel Gonzalez, "El jefe del Estado Mayor de Ejército reconoce que existe ansiedad y tensión entre sus subordinados," *El País*, 16 November 1989.

3. See Carlos Yarnoz, "España eliminará decenas de carros de combate al concluir la negociación sobre desarme en Europa," *El País*, 2 January 1989; and Ignacio Cembrero, "La negociación sobre desarme otorga a España un papel más relevante en Europa," *El País*, 28 November 1989.
4. Xavier I. Taibo, "The Spanish Army Today," *Armies & Weapons*, no. 28 (15 October-15 November 1976), pp. 38-44; and "Die spanischen Landstreitkräfte," *Soldat und Technik*, August 1984, pp. 422-25.
5. On the evolution of the French army since the end of the war in Algeria, see Diego A. Ruiz Palmer, "France," in *NATO-Warsaw Pact Force Mobilization*, ed. Jeffrey Simon (Washington: National Defense Univ. Press, 1988), pp. 269-316.
6. On bilateral defense cooperation between Spain and France, see: Jean-François Daguzan, "La Coopération Militaire avec la France: Première Rupture du Monopole U.S.," *Le Système de Défense de l'Espagne, 1939-1984*, Thèse pour le Doctorat d'Etat de Science Politique, Tome II (Paris: Université de Paris-Sud, March 1986), pp. 632-41. On bilateral exercises between the Spanish and French armies, see "Galia X," *Armées d'Aujourd'hui*, no. 110 (May 1986), p. 14; and "Galia-X-86," *Europäische Wehrkunde*, June 1986, p. 346.
7. "Spain Sidles Into NATO," *The Economist*, 23 November 1985, pp. 37-38; and Xavier I. Taibo, "The Spanish Army Approaches its Future," *Jane's Military Review*, 1986 (London: Jane's, 1986), pp. 53-68.
8. Carlos Yarnoz, "El Ejército ha reducido los generales de 250 a 143," *El País*, 19 December 1988.
9. Carlos Yarnoz, "Defensa pretende una segunda reducción del Ejército, pese a la oposición de los generales," *El País*, 4 December 1988.
10. Francisco L. de Sepúlveda, "Restructuring Spain's Defense Organization," *International Defense Review*, 17 (October 1984), 1431-37.
11. "Tartessos 85," *Reconquista*, no. 419 (November 1985), pp. 32-33; and Alfredo Florensa, "Prueba a gran escala de los mandos operativos," *Revista Española de Defensa*, no. 21 (November 1989), pp. 16-21.
12. Carlos Yarnoz, "El nuevo Plan Estratégico será el primero en referirse a la aportación a la OTAN," *El País*, 14 February 1988.
13. See José Uxo Palasi, "El eje Baleares-Estrecho-Canarias como principal lineamiento de la defensa española," *España dentro de la Alianza Atlántica*, op. cit., pp. 47-63; and José Uxo Palasi, "El espacio estratégico español, hoy," *Política Exterior*, 1 (Spring 1987), 208-22.
14. On the Spanish missions, of which there are six, see Juan Vicente Boo, "Ojeda: 'La URSS sigue realizando un rearme general,'" *APC*, 2 June 1988; and "Spain's Military Role within the NATO Alliance," *International Defense Review*, 21 (July 1988), 771-72.
15. Carlos Yarnoz, "El Gobierno acepta que soldados españoles intervengan en misiones de la OTAN fuera del territorio nacional," *El País*, 24 February 1988; Carlos Yarnoz, "Serra distingue entre 'tránsito' y 'escala' al hablar del paso de armas nucleares por territorio español," *El País*, 20 April 1988; Carlos Yarnoz, "Serra dice que no se enviarán soldados españoles a Centroeuropa," *El País*, 21 April 1988; and Carlos Yarnoz, "El ingreso en la UEO amplía la posibilidad de que el Ejército actúe en Centroeuropa," *El País*, 26 May 1988.
16. José Uxo Palasi, "Concepto de la Fuerza de Despliegue Rápido," *El Debate Estratégico y Táctico dentro de la Alianza Atlántica* (Madrid: Instituto de Cuestiones Internacionales, 1989), pp. 65-80; Roman David Ortiz Marina, "Una Fuerza de Despliegue Rápido para España?" *ICE-Revista de Economía*, no. 668 (April 1989), pp. 177-90; and Carlos Yarnoz, "La Fuerza de Intervención será la aportación de Tierra a la OTAN y podrá actuar fuera de España," *El País*, 9 December 1988.
17. Carlos Yarnoz, "La influencia de la futura Fuerza de Acción Rápida (FAR)," *El País*, 4 December 1988.
18. On Soviet force restructuring, see Kenneth M. Keltner and Graham H. Turbiville, Jr., "Soviet Reinforcement in Europe," *Military Review*, 67 (April 1987), 34-43; and James Sherr, *The Impact of Current Developments in Soviet Defence Policy* (RMA Sandhurst: Soviet Studies Research Centre, December 1988).
19. On the French *Force d'Action Rapide*, the Franco-German brigade, and British reinforcement concepts, see Diego A. Ruiz Palmer, "Countering Soviet Encirclement Operations: Emerging NATO Concepts," *International Defense Review*, 21 (November 1988), 1413-18; and Mr. Speed, *State of European Security-Intervention Forces and Reinforcement for the Centre and the North*, Document 1183 (Paris: Assembly of West European Union, 26 April 1989), pp. 14-17.
20. A vehicle for pursuing interoperability among rapid deployment forces might be the FINABEL Coordination Committee. The committee, established in 1953, comprises the army (land forces) chiefs of staff of the WEU members. Its mission is to develop common armaments specifications and operational procedures. Jean Laimay, "FINABEL Coordination Committee," *NATO's Fifteen Nations*, 27 (August-September 1982), 86-88.
21. See, for example, *Proposals for a European High-Speed Network* (Brussels: Community of European Railways, January 1989).
22. The need for considering the future shape of the Spanish army was recently conceded by the Spanish Minister of Defense; see "Serra considera necesaria la reestructuración del Ejército," *El País*, 29 November 1989. A reorganization of the Spanish army along lines similar to those proposed in this article is discussed in: Andrés Ortega, "Ejércitos, ¿para qué?," *El País*, 25 March 1990.



## *Commentary & Reply*

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### **MORE ABOUT ABOUT FACE**

#### **To the Editor:**

Colonel A. J. Bacevich's review essay on David Hackworth's *About Face* (*Parameters*, December 1989) troubles me deeply. Being a long-time admirer of Bacevich, one of the Army's brightest and most innovative officers—and never having been a partisan of Hackworth, of whom my Vietnam memories are a mixture of admiration and repulsion—I am grieved that the reviewer, in disparaging the author, has diminished himself. Of course Hackworth is (or at least was) not a nice person. Of course his ideas are disputable and, in some cases, wildly off the mark. And of course the reviewer has every right to make both observations. But he should have, for the sake of his own reputation, done it forthrightly and not in a mean-spirited and petty manner. In so doing, he has—worst offense of all—obscured the truly excellent substance of his own essay. He has thereby kicked away a golden opportunity.

Colonel William L. Hauser, USA Ret.

#### **To the Editor:**

I was very interested in Colonel Bacevich's review of Hackworth's book *About Face* and am using the book as required reading in a US military history course I am teaching this year. Two points regarding the review:

First, I am uncomfortable with the shrill attacks on Hackworth's moral fiber. If the reviewer is attempting to demonstrate that leadership can be adversely affected by moral turpitude, he misses the point and decends into self-righteousness.

Second, the most important areas are those where Bacevich and Hackworth appear to be in agreement. These include the reevaluation of S. L. A. Marshall as a military historian, effective training techniques, principles of leadership, and the effects of increased bureaucratization on the Army. Unfortunately, these areas receive the least attention in the review, and yet they represent the strengths of the book.

Hackworth uses his training in Italy following World War II as a touchstone throughout the book, almost to a fault. Obviously, he considers the lessons learned in that training environment to be instrumental to his later successes. The training he describes was predicated upon repetition. Basic skills were drilled until they became second nature and applied in situations that were as realistic as possible. Training was conducted by men who believed their own survival would depend on the unit's proficiency; they had a vested interest in ensuring that units were fully qualified to go into combat because rotation occurred only when hostilities were concluded. Hackworth holds these combat-hardened veterans in the highest esteem for their expertise. They had acquired a combination of education and experience that made them proficient at preparing subordinates for combat.

I myself am not comfortable with aspects of Hackworth's personal life (my wife of 15 years tells me I'd better be damned uncomfortable with some of them). However, because of my own mistakes I have resisted the temptation to be judgmental. Even if Hackworth's prose *is* dated, the war stories by this most highly decorated living American will, we can hope, cause people to read the more substantive material. His ideas on leadership (there is a list of leadership principles in *About Face* that we should all carry for ready reference) and on the importance of realistic training are of permanent value.

In sum, I did not find the review effective. It failed to address several important themes and seemed to suggest that criticism of the Army is synonymous with disloyalty. Regardless of the packaging, there are important things to be gained from this book. And as painfully revealing as this account may be concerning Hackworth's personal life, it is far less painful than waiting to relearn on the battlefield those lessons he teaches us in the book.

Captain Timothy P. Hogan, New York Army National Guard  
Assistant Professor of Military Science  
Syracuse University

#### **The Reviewer Replies:**

An autobiography or memoir is necessarily an exercise in self-justification. The memoirist recounts his aspirations in terms designed to evoke the reader's sympathy, grandiloquently recalls his achievements, explains away (or ignores) his disappointments, and claims his niche in history. The formula that worked for Benjamin Franklin in 1791 works today for the reigning stars of politics, Hollywood, or the NBA. Only the shadowy intervention in recent years of the ghostwriter or collaborator has altered traditional practice—though as *About Face* makes abundantly clear, seldom in a way that improves the literary value of the final product.

Any reader would be ill-advised to look to such recollections for revealed truth. Even distinguished examples of the genre—George Kennan's *Memoirs*, for example—offer at best one *version* of reality. Moreover, if a legitimate literary form, the memoir also provides fertile ground for the flimflam and the con job. The record is replete with examples of best-selling memoirs that are hardly more than fabrications—Douglas MacArthur's *Reminiscences* being an egregious and embarrassing example.

Given such a mixed record, any newly published memoir deserves to be greeted with at least a modicum of skepticism. An assignment to review such a volume implies an obligation to validate the essential legitimacy of the author's viewpoint. Does the work possess sufficient merit for inclusion in the standard canon of works on the subject or is it a bogus exercise in self-advertisement?

When it came to Hackworth's tale, the popular media largely passed over that question. Instead, they embraced *About Face* uncritically, even gushily, succumbing to the allure of the warrior who (wow!) ended up viewing the Vietnam War as ill-conceived and (imagine!) doubted the efficacy of nuclear weapons. Few reviewers noted—because few reviewers cared—that Hackworth's real subject was officership. *About Face* is vulgar, petty, and poorly written, all qualities that make it a bad book. Alas, it is also a dangerous book, given the corrupting model of officership that

Hackworth expounds. My aim as a reviewer was to expose his views as fraudulent. If the language used was not genteel, I can only say that such a malignant book on a subject of importance to many of us does not deserve magnanimity.

Colonel Andrew J. Bacevich

## **DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN!**

### **To the Editor:**

I have read with interest Martin Blumenson's thought-provoking essay "America's World War II Leaders in Europe: Some Thoughts" (*Parameters*, December 1989). My reactions span the spectrum from those of an officer with 29 years in the Marine Corps to those of a professional historian. Blumenson's discussion of the values and attitudes of the Old Army caused me to reflect upon my own socialization process as a young Marine Corps officer.

It should be noted that the values described by Professor Blumenson in the interwar Army were not confined just to that institution. Our interwar Corps certainly shared those same attitudes, and they survived not only into the initial post-World War II years but also into those following the Korean War. In my officer candidate screening at the Training and Test Regiment and initial commissioned officer training at The Basic School, our officers and staff noncommissioned officers inculcated into us concepts of proper officer's behavior and what we were expected not to do. There were four don'ts: officers in uniform did not carry an umbrella, hold a baby, hold hands with a lady, nor eat or drink in the "wrong" places. This socialization process was so effective that it remains strongly embedded to this day, 29 years after my entry into the Marine Corps.

Of course, such taboos reflect values of another era and really have nothing to do with combat effectiveness and inherent military professionalism. However, in the same paragraph discussing these essentially irrelevant values, Professor Blumenson addresses several others of more pertinence. Although his assertion that interwar Army officers disliked "such mundane matters as business and petty trade" is harshly phrased, it indirectly addresses a problem of contemporary concern, that is, officers participating in business while still on active duty. The current Commandant of the Marine Corps has properly attacked this practice. As he has continually emphasized, mastering the profession of arms—i.e. developing and maintaining proficiency in it—is a 24-hour-a-day task, 52 weeks a year, a process and obligation which spans the time from entry into service to retirement or departure from it. Engaging in business and commerce while being a professional soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine, although possibly permitted as a civil right in our nation, simultaneously distracts the professional from his primary tasks for which the government pays him and which society relies on him to perform well. Society, that is to say, places its faith in the professional's skills and dedication to preserve it against all enemies, foreign and domestic. The value articulated by Professor Blumenson which the officers of the Old Army (and by extension the Old Corps) had is one that would be worthy of emulation today in our highly materialistic society: "They prided themselves on being oblivious to their salaries, anything but money-grubbing, so long, that is, as they could maintain a certain standard of living . . . ."

More serious and thought-provoking is his development of the theme that possibly we have viewed our leaders of World War II through the lens of hero worship, attributing to them standards of professional capability and excellence they never possessed. This led me to remember comments made in 1978 by Dr. Amos Perlmutter of American University at The Citadel Conference on War and Diplomacy. As one of three keynote panelists/speakers addressing the conference at its end, Professor Perlmutter spoke without a written text, and the taping machine malfunctioned.

Nonetheless, his points were so indelible that 12 years later I still remember them. Dr. Perlmutter postulated that professional military education resulted in "institutional mediocrity." This process, he claimed, ensured that men of genius such as Caesar or Marlborough or Napoleon would never rise to command in a modern professional army. Of course, left unsaid was the opposite of this supposition: that leaders of extreme incompetence likewise would never rise to command; if there were no Alexander the Great or Frederick the Great in modern military forces, there likewise might not be a Crassus or Varus, both of whom took Roman armies into the field and had them literally destroyed, respectively, at Carrhae in 53 B.C. and the Teutoberg Forest in 9 A.D.

Although phrased differently, this is what Professor Blumenson is addressing. Even if he is correct in his underlying thesis, the United States was indeed fortunate that it could identify, train, and educate men of "average ability," developing their potential to a maximum, so that when the crisis of 1941-45 arose they were able to meet the challenge.

I would postulate that "proving" his argument that our leaders in Europe were "essentially bland and plodding . . . workmanlike rather than bold, prudent rather than daring," and then ascertaining how they became that way and still won on the field of battle, would be a greater challenge than proving exceptional brilliance or incompetence. Ultimately, I see nothing wrong in these new reflections that our military heroes of World War II had feet of clay. Such reflections should force us to examine those leaders in a more detached and objective manner.

Such endeavors are long overdue, both for the American forces and especially for our analysis of the German army since 1870. I have been on the faculty of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College for 15 years. In that time I have noticed that many of our students see themselves as, or would like to become, the next Chesty Puller, George S. Patton, Robert E. Lee, Erwin Rommel, etc. The simple fact is that such leaders are by definition rare or exceptional, and are given the accolade "great" because "greatness" is itself a scarce trait in men. We on military school faculties should recognize the rarity of true greatness and challenge our current and future students simply to develop their abilities to the maximum extent possible. For most, they will by definition be average; very few, if any, will achieve true greatness even if the opportunity presents itself. However, if we faculty members and our students do as well as the Army (and Army Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps) officers of World War II, then our nation and the ideals for which it stands will be in good hands.

Lieutenant Colonel Donald F. Bittner, Ph.D., USMCR Ret.  
Military Historian, USMC Command and Staff College  
Quantico, Virginia

### **The Author Replies:**

I am delighted to read Don Bittner's reactions to my essay in the December 1989 issue of *Parameters*. His long tenure as officer, historian, and faculty member at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College gives him a wonderful vantage point from which to judge the way we identify our military leaders.

I have great respect for Dr. Bittner's views. He may be absolutely right to place his confidence in military students of "average" ability.

Yet I question his apparent endorsement of the notion that military education results in institutional mediocrity. If military education prevents men of genius from rising to high command, let's do away with it—unless, of course, we need it to keep leaders of extreme incompetence from reaching high rank.

What bothers me most is that we have tended to trust men of modest endowments instead of fastening our hopes on men of outstanding talent.

Martin Blumenson

### **THE CARRIER/B36 CONTROVERSY OF 1949: A GLANCE BACK, A GLANCE ASKANCE**

#### **To the Editor:**

The efforts of Lieutenant Colonel Phillip Meilinger, USAF, to draw "lessons learned" from the events of 1949 ("The Admirals' Revolt of 1949: Lessons for Today," September 1989) show that, in some circles at least, the bureaucratic schisms of that turbulent period are alive and well. As undesirable as it is to resurrect old conflicts, the author does his readers a disservice through an inappropriate and intemperate rendition of the "facts."

It is true that Admiral Radford's ideas about possible strategic tasks for naval aviation must be seen at least partially in the context of the Navy's growing competition with the Air Force for more budget dollars. Colonel Meilinger follows his commentary on this by disparaging Radford for thus broadening the range of naval aircraft missions to justify a larger air arm. NSPS 3 had, however, raised the prospect that naval aircraft would aid the strategic air force by suppressing Soviet fighter opposition. Was not the ultimate aim of unification, explicit in NSPS 3, more effective interservice cooperation?

The Navy had requested congressional hearings about the larger issues of military roles and missions. It also had as CNO Admiral Denfield, who was generally not an effective bureaucratic infighter. Colonel Meilinger infers from these facts that the primary "lesson learned" was that the Navy should have more respect for civilian authority. How does this figure?

Colonel Meilinger concedes that "in the strategic sense the Navy was eventually proved right, but for reasons they had not anticipated." His reluctance to acknowledge foresight belies his prejudices. At the time, international events clearly pointed to a need to keep our eye on the ball with regard to anticipated conflicts. For example, the Korea problem was brewing, a coup had occurred in Czechoslovakia, unrest and instability were growing in the Third World, and the Berlin blockade and

other related events were manifest signs of a growing strain in East-West relations. Many national and military leaders were actively concerned about the impending problems of a post-World War II world. The Navy was arguing that there was indeed a need for strategic forces to which the air arms of the military could contribute, but that there was an equal requirement for non-strategic forces. This was articulated most effectively by Admiral Sherman, CNO after Admiral Denfield.

There is no little irony in the fact that the Air Force has since adjusted its own strategic vision. While SAC has dominated Air Force philosophy, the redefining of Air Force missions and evolution of TAC and MAC, made manifest by our involvement in Korea and Vietnam, is noteworthy. MAC, in particular, has an enormous and irreplaceable capability that has proven itself as probably the most continuously operational of the Air Force arms. In any event, each of these Air Force missions has been conducted with great pride and professionalism. Their development has responded to threats and national requirements. The fact that the Navy was prescient on the matter of a need for a balance of capability does not make the point less valid.

There is no doubt that unification and anticipated budget constraints always bring with them a tendency toward acrimonious arguments among the services. The lesson to be learned from the post-World War II period, however, is not how supposedly wrong one service was compared with another, but how critical it is to maintain a steady sight on the deadly capabilities that threaten our nation. It is important to maintain a balance of forces to meet as many of the threats, away from our own homeland, as effectively as possible. The lesson learned in 1949 should be kept in mind today. We cannot become captured by a purely strategic mindset which dominates military and policy thinking to the detriment of conventional forces.

Commander Ann E. Rondeau, USN  
Alexandria, Virginia

#### To the Editor:

I was interested to read Lieutenant Colonel Phillip Meilinger's article, "The Admirals' Revolt of 1949: Lessons for Today," which appeared in the September 1989 issue of *Parameters*. Being familiar with Colonel Meilinger's strongly researched 1985 dissertation on General Hoyt Vandenberg, since published by Indiana University Press, I was expecting a solidly grounded piece which would contain some interesting insights on the events labeled the "revolt of the admirals."

Upon reading the article, however, I found myself not only disappointed but appalled. What I had hoped would be an insightful piece on the events of 1948-49 proved instead to be a thinly disguised polemic against the Navy. I was particularly struck by Colonel Meilinger's optimistic assertion that his article was "based largely on primary sources hitherto unused." It is fascinating to note that in an article which purports to reveal the Navy's methods during the "revolt" and which comments at some length on the issue of service professionalism, the author did not attempt to use any Navy primary documentation. This despite the fact that virtually all of the Navy's material on the events in question is declassified and readily available to researchers at the Naval Historical Center's Operational Archives at the Washington Navy Yard.

Yet, because he failed to use Navy primary source material, Colonel Meilinger provides us with an article which is not only replete with factual inaccuracies but one which reveals that the author has, at best, only a hazy understanding of the basic chronology of the events he is writing about. Although limitations of space preclude even a cursory listing of the article's errors of fact, at a minimum the author should be made aware that the Navy did *not* want the mission of strategic bombing (*Rear Admiral Daniel Gallery's* proposal was not supported in OpNav), Navy Secretary John Sullivan did *not* order the raiding of Op-23 or its closing, and General Eisenhower did *not* tell Louis Johnson to scrap the carrier *United States*.

The subtitle to Colonel Meilinger's article was "Lessons for Today." Unfortunately, the lesson most evident from his article is that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing indeed.

Jeffrey G. Barlow, Ph.D.  
Naval Historical Center  
Washington, D.C.

#### **The Author Replies:**

I regret that Dr. Barlow was appalled by my article, but the Revolt of the Admirals was an appalling incident. Regarding the three specific objections he raises: After his famous memo stating the Navy was better able to perform the strategic bombing mission than was the Air Force, Admiral Gallery wrote a series of articles for the *Saturday Evening Post* in which he argued much the same thing. Given this repeated public stance by a high-ranking officer on the Navy staff, it is not difficult to understand why the Air Force believed Admiral Gallery was speaking for the Navy. More to the point, however, the entire thrust of the Navy's argument in the House hearings of 1949 followed Gallery's logic: the Air Force and its B-36 were incapable of carrying out the strategic air offensive; smaller and faster Navy bombers launched from aircraft carriers were more effective; thus, the United States should buy more carriers and fewer bombers. Is Dr. Barlow really trying to argue that the two dozen high-ranking Navy and Marine officers testifying under oath before Congress were speaking only "unofficially"?

As to whether General Eisenhower supported the cancellation of the supercarrier: In a letter dated 12 August 1949 Eisenhower wrote: "I do not see how we can give the super carrier a sufficiently high place in our priorities that we can afford to build them in an era when we are going to face smaller and smaller appropriations." That sounds pretty clear to me.

Concerning Op-23: Dr. Barlow is correct; it was Secretary of the Navy Francis P. Matthews who ordered Marine Corps guards to raid Op-23 and place Captain Burke and his staff under house arrest.

In the most basic sense this incident concerned civilian control of the military. In 1949 President Harry Truman and the Secretary of Defense decided the supercarrier was unnecessary. If the sole response of naval leaders had been to call for a public debate on the issue of national strategy, then one could not fault them. What was unacceptable, however, was the smear campaign launched against Secretaries Louis Johnson and Stuart Symington, who were accused of illegally

manipulating aircraft contracts for their own personal gain. Congress found "not one iota of evidence" to substantiate these charges. As a consequence, Admiral Denfeld was relieved by the Secretary of the Navy, not—as Commander Rondeau implies—because he was a poor "infighter," but because he was unable or unwilling to prevent insubordination within his command.

The embarrassment generated by the decisive refutation of the trumped up charges against the Secretaries has caused some individuals to shift the focus of this controversy to the issue of national strategy—"although their methods were wrong their motives were pure." Even here, however, serious problems remain. It must be remembered that in 1949 the only perceived threat to the United States was the Soviet Union, which possessed a huge army and a large submarine force, but virtually no surface fleet. Joint war plans were drawn up and approved by all the services to meet this threat. Roles and missions were agreed to by the services to carry out these war plans. Unification meant that for the first time all the services would debate what weapons to build; money was too scarce to allow each service a free hand. The Navy, for example, formally agreed to the development and procurement of the B-36. Were supercarriers needed to counter the Soviet submarine threat and to keep open our vital sea lanes—the Navy's primary mission? No. The supercarrier was designed to carry heavy bombers that could wage strategic air warfare, which was not the Navy's responsibility. Yet, the admirals argued atomic warfare was immoral. If so, then why did they wish to participate? The Navy also stated the B-36 could not safely penetrate Soviet airspace, but for reasons never explained, claimed their Neptunes could. Finally, it was maintained that the bombing of industrial targets deep within the Soviet Union by B-36s would not win the war. (The Air Force never claimed it would). But how could bombing close-in shore targets by naval aircraft have brought surrender? Commander Rondeau's suggestion of using supercarrier-based escort aircraft for the B-36 is interesting, but the Navy did not advocate that in 1949. Moreover, the Navy fighters of that era possessed such short range they would have been of little use as escorts.

Using carriers for power projection, as in the joint-service Libyan strike of 1986, or as floating airfields in the benign environment offshore Korea and Vietnam, would have been a viable mission. However, not one of the 27 Navy witnesses suggested this in the 1949 hearings. Thus, Korea totally surprised our military leaders—it was not "brewing" as Commander Rondeau states—showing that large-scale conventional warfare was still possible. Such conflicts have indeed vindicated the necessity of conventional forces, but this eventuality was not anticipated by any of the services in 1949. Global war employing atomic weapons was assumed.

What are the lessons of the Admirals' Revolt for today? As then, we are now in an era of dramatically shrinking defense expenditures, and it is likely none of the services will be comfortable with its share. The services should respond by rigorously thinking through how best to serve the nation's interests, not their own. If there are differences of opinion—which will no doubt be common—then the military must react with an honest and straightforward debate on the issues, and not by sully the integrity and motives of the country's civilian leadership.

Lieutenant Colonel Phillip Meilinger, USAF



## COMBAT EXCLUSION: RULE OR MISRULE?

### To the Editor:

In his provocative article, "Affirmative Action and Combat Exclusion: Gender Roles in the US Army" (*Parameters*, December 1989), I wish Richard Hooker had gone a bit further to discuss innate ways in which the two sexes diverge, from childhood, in their propensities toward risk-taking physical activity. Doctrinaire egalitarians are often uncomfortable with evidence from physical anthropology and archeology, but that is more reason to study it carefully.

Why do you suppose human males are able to develop a strong overhand throw? I believe Robert Ardrey and other students of our pre-human origins are correct in ascribing this to the vital need to throw stones, spears, and such at the leopard, the lion, the bear who long ago in the dim past sought an easy meal near our ancestors' campfires and other refuges. The human groups which failed to defend their females and young against carnivores left us none of their genetic legacy. *Their* remains were shared by the carnivore with *its* females and young. When the supply of stones was limited, and the lion was hungry, a hard, accurate throw to the lion's eye was crucial to group survival. Proof that some of us have not entirely lost these virtues is the high salary commanded by a pitcher who can consistently get an 87-mph fastball into the strike zone.

Some of the young males in any social, territorial primate, whether baboon, man, or other, are expendable, when *group survival* is at stake. Surviving males (even a few) can father a next generation. Females are too precious to risk in combat. Without them, there is no future.

Ardrey wrote a chilling account of how two adult male baboons dropped from a tree branch onto the back of an adult leopard. All three animals died after a ferocious struggle, but the rest of the baboon troop lived. A few died for the many, doing for them what they could not do for themselves. Sound familiar? We have come to call it sacrifice, and it is the soldier's *raison d'être*.

Why is the primary male group, infantry squad, street gang, or football team usually eight to eleven in number? How many men, armed with only hand weapons, are required to subdue, cooperatively, a large prey, e.g. bison, moose, mammoth?

Males in groups have hunted for our supply of protein far longer than our brief recent times of agriculture, the settled life, written language, and trade. That long pre-history has left a legacy in the differing patterns of male and female social development. Some of the best male fighters don't want the complication of sexual partnerships in a military chain of command. Hormonal drives are nearly as strong as thirst and hunger. We would be fools to underestimate them.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Fairchild  
ODCSOPS  
Washington, D.C.

### The Author Replies:

While one can plausibly argue that anthropological and archeological evidence may be relevant to the current debate about the combat exclusion policies,

there are, it seems to me, other arguments which are more germane and pressing. Chief among them is the relationship between voluntary and involuntary service. When mobilization becomes necessary, it will be difficult if not impossible to avoid drafting females into the combat arms if they are serving there already, unless we grant males the same consideration—an unlikely prospect, most would agree.

In the wake of Operation Just Cause in Panama last December, the combat exclusion debate has been thrown into high relief. It should not be necessary to go as far as Colonel Fairchild suggests, or to invoke the ghosts of primordial and tribal imagery, to frame a realistic and rational defense of the combat exclusion rule. That such efforts will be forthcoming from the Congress and the defense establishment is something devoutly to be wished for—as long as we make sure that the commitment to full opportunities for women consistent with readiness and combat capability does not suffer in the process.

Captain Richard D. Hooker, Jr.

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Annual subscriptions to *Parameters* are available from the Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The current subscription cost is \$7.00 for domestic or APO addresses, \$8.75 for foreign addresses. Single copies are also available at a cost of \$4.50 for domestic addresses, \$5.63 for foreign addresses. Checks should be made payable to the Superintendent of Documents. Credit card orders may be placed by calling GPO at (202) 783-3238 during business hours.

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## ***Book Reviews***

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**Intervention in the Caribbean: The Dominican Crisis of 1965.** By Bruce Palmer, Jr. Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1989. 212 pages. \$23.00. Reviewed by Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., USA Ret., syndicated columnist for the *Los Angeles Times* and editor of *Vietnam* magazine.

This is an important book, one made even more so by recent sea changes in the nation's strategic environment. What began as a chronicle of the US intervention in the Dominican Republic now becomes a guide and reference work for the post-Cold War "conduct of lesser military operations or so-called 'small wars,' the kind of conflict situation in which the United States in the future is most likely to become involved." As DCSOPS in the Pentagon when the crisis began, later as commander of US forces in the Dominican Republic, and subsequently as deputy commander of the Inter-American Peace Force that assumed control of the operation, retired Army General Bruce Palmer has the ideal qualifications to instruct us on this subject.

General Palmer's account addresses one of the key questions posed by many Americans in the 1990s: Why do we need a military now that problems can be resolved, as in Eastern Europe during the past few months, through peaceful negotiations rather than through brute military force? The question itself, General Palmer points out, posits a false either/or proposition:

Throughout history, the most successful statesmen and diplomats have recognized that the key to the art of negotiations lies in the fundamental interrelationship of diplomacy and force. The two must work hand in glove, seeking to achieve national objectives with a minimum of force—ideally, not even having to threaten the use of force but simply to make its availability clear to the other side. . . . [D]iplomacy and force are not black-and-white alternatives but must be closely intermeshed for the best prospects for success; neither can accomplish national aims alone.

The Dominican Republic experience of 1965-1966, General Palmer believes, was "a unique example of the skillful employment of diplomacy and force in tandem." Unfortunately, it is a story not well known. "Virtually all the civilian authors who have written about the crisis . . . have condemned the US action. . . . [R]elatively few commentators have acknowledged the fact that the Dominican Republic in a political sense has been a success story for more than twenty years since, while others say that the intervention worked, but for the wrong reasons."

*Intervention in the Caribbean* sets out to correct that record. Palmer begins with his marching orders from JCS Chairman General Earle Wheeler at noon on 30 April 1965 to "take command of all US forces in the Dominican Republic as soon as [he] could get there" with the "unstated mission to prevent another Cuba and, at the same time, to avoid another situation like Vietnam." At 1400 hours, without even time to say goodbye to his wife, he was on his way.

After discussing the origins of the Dominican Republic crisis, General Palmer details the airlanding of 82d Airborne Division elements at San Isidro airfield east of the capital, Santo Domingo, reinforcing the Marine elements that had earlier landed on the western side. The city itself, however, was in the hands of the rebels. One of General Palmer's first acts was to seek out and establish a close working relationship with William Tapley "Tap" Bennett, the US Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. This liaison, and the role subsequently played by Ellsworth Bunker, the US Ambassador to the Organization of American States, would prove of decisive importance.

Subsequent chapters lay out the military actions taken to stabilize the situation, the creation of the Inter-American Peace Force, the establishment of a provisional government, the return to normalcy, and the completion of the Peace Force mission on 21 September 1986. The success had not been without cost. "On the military side, US casualties were 44 dead (27 killed in action), 172 wounded in action, and 111 injured—the bulk of these suffered by the 82d Airborne Division."

Palmer then assesses the political-military issues involved, including criticisms of the operation, particularly those of Senator J. William Fulbright, then chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. He then examines the effectiveness of the Organization of American States and goes on to scrutinize the operational performance of the US military. "*Movement* . . . was accomplished efficiently with no major problems." *Communications*, however, was hampered in the early stages by the rebel hold on major telecommunications centers. And, despite "a long history of US-Dominican Republic relations," *intelligence* was scanty. *Troop performance* "was commendable, as expected." *Logistics* too were no problem, primarily because of support facilities in Puerto Rico.

In comments obviously unfamiliar to those who planned the 1989 Panama invasion, General Palmer noted that "in Santo Domingo the welfare, as well as the control, of the people was a prime consideration; hence the *civil affairs and psychological operations* units were extremely useful in accomplishing our mission. . . . [T]he military police units were worth their weight in gold. . . . [W]e found that a major weakness in the initial troop list was a shortage of MP units, and we soon had to give them a priority on a par with combat units."

General Palmer concludes with a look at Caribbean realities for the United States today. Some of his comments have been overtaken by events, but his overall conclusions still ring true: "The United States must take steps to refurbish its historic special relationship with Latin America, especially the Caribbean region. . . . [F]orging stronger and more enduring links among the nations of this . . . region can result in a stronger extended homeland for the peoples concerned, based on a mutually beneficial community of interests."

**Moral Issues in Military Decision Making.** By Anthony E. Hartle.  
Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 1989. 180 pages. \$25.00.  
Reviewed by Michael Walzer, author of *Just and Unjust Wars*.

The first argument of Anthony Hartle's book is that the officer corps of the armed forces constitutes a company of professionals whose activities are governed by a code. Career officers will have no difficulty recognizing themselves here, nor will

the sociologist who studies them. Clearly, the officers exhibit the special qualities of professionalism: expertise, collegiality, social responsibility. But civilians who remember the conscript armies of World War II, or even of Korea and Vietnam, may wonder about the relevance of this professionalism. Career officers are more likely than any similar group to be seconded by laypeople who are brought into the service for brief terms, hastily trained, and never admitted to the collegiality of the profession. More than this: career officers in a democracy are directly subordinated to laypeople or, better, to the members of a different profession (politicians), who commonly fall short of the highest standards and who, in any case, know little about war. Lawyers, doctors, engineers, and architects are very differently situated; they are subordinated to individual clients, but not to the political authorities.

These two factors—reliance on nonprofessionals and subordination to politicians—put the professionalism of the military under strain and establish clear limits to the prerogatives of the soldier. At the same time, they make the professional code all the more important, for the code teaches the soldier, among other things, the limits of his profession. Hartle provides a wonderfully lucid, and a morally and politically sensitive, account of these limits. The account would have profited, I think, from some consideration of the ways in which civilians impinge upon (and sometimes invade) the military profession and of the ways in which politics impinges upon the military enterprise. But it is a fine account nonetheless, useful to soldiers and civilians alike.

Useful, especially, because in his second argument Hartle insists that the soldier's code does not take precedence over civilian morality. Here is the hard question for all professionals: what is the reach and authority of their code? In sociological jargon, is it fully or only partially differentiated from the moral principles that govern everyday life? Hartle defends partial differentiation, which means that purposes internal to the profession are never, in his view, dominant. Military necessity makes for certain moral exemptions, but it doesn't make for a systematic or radical overriding of ordinary morality. (That is why military decisionmaking is accessible to civilian soldiers.) The Army is an instrument for the defense of social values, and it is limited by the most critical of our own values: respect for the rights of individuals. With care and subtlety, Hartle explains how this respect "works" when military decisions have to be made—and also when other sorts of professional decisions have to be made. His systematic comparisons, particularly with lawyers and judges, are exemplary: they show that moral analysis necessarily incorporates sociological understanding.

Hartle is a deontological moralist—one who believes that some acts are morally obligatory in and of themselves, quite apart from whether they tend to produce a good result. Though he recognizes the extent to which soldiers have to calculate the consequences of what they do, he insists that at some point calculation stops—and it is individual rights that determine the stopping point. He is not, however, a moral absolutist; at least, absolutism does not set the tone of his analysis. He has a fine sense for the difficulty and the painfulness of decisionmaking in war, and he knows how to worry. Indeed, the greatest strength of his book is the example he sets of disciplined worrying. I think that he would want to add, and professional worrying. But reading his case studies, with no military expertise, I felt entirely at ease with his arguments. Up to a point, no doubt, worries are professional, governed, that is, by functional considerations; then they are simply human. The good professional knows when to make the switch.

Hartle is clearly, in all the areas that I know anything about, a good professional, and his goodness is in part the result of an extraordinary learning experience. In a book that is mostly impersonal, scholarly, critically distanced, he permits himself one personal note. He once believed, he tells us, that the professional code was all a soldier needed to know. But "two years of combat service in Southeast Asia . . . generated numerous morally ambiguous situations, and the answers provided by the code as I understood it were sometimes incompatible with intuitions of conscience. . . . [T]he code itself was no longer enough." I would welcome the full autobiographical story. But this book, a reflection on the experience of Vietnam, is one of the few products of that war for which we can be wholly grateful.

**Disaster in Korea.** By Roy E. Appleman. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M Press, 1990. 440 pages. \$35.00.

**Escaping the Trap: The US Army X Corps in Northeast Korea, 1950.** By Roy E. Appleman. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M Press, 1990. 411 pages. \$35.00.

**East of Chosin.** By Roy E. Appleman. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M Press, 1987. 399 pages. \$28.50.

**Ridgway Duels for Korea.** By Roy E. Appleman. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M Press, forthcoming. 658 pages. \$39.50.

**Reviewed by Clay Blair, author of *The Forgotten War: America in Korea, 1950-1953*.**

Nearly thirty years ago, the Army's Office of the Chief of Military History (OCMH) published *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (1961), by Lieutenant Colonel Roy E. Appleman, AUS, a reserve historian called to active duty in the Korean War. The first of several planned volumes to record the combat action in the Korean War, *South to the Naktong* covered the first five months, 25 June to 24 November 1950, when the Chinese Communists intervened in overwhelming strength and drove United Nations forces from North Korea. Appleman was scheduled to write a second volume, *Ebb and Flow*, carrying the action forward to the beginning of the armistice talks in July 1951, but for various complicated reasons the writing of *Ebb and Flow* was assigned to other historians at OCMH. Finished by Billy C. Mossman, it is finally to be published later this year, to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the onset of the war.

During his four years on active duty, Appleman had amassed a mountain of research. Over the succeeding three decades, while serving as a historian at the National Park Service and in retirement, he continued researching the Korean War by means of a running correspondence with participants (privates to generals) and by digging into the tens of thousands of documents and personal papers at the National Archives and elsewhere.

Now in his 86th year, Appleman has produced four more volumes of combat action in Korea, picking up where he left off in *South to the Naktong* and going forward chronologically to July 1951. These volumes overlap—and scoop—the long-delayed

official *Ebb and Flow*. Three have been published; the fourth, *Ridgway Duels for Korea*, will be available later this year. The three new Appleman volumes published so far focus on one critical month of the war, 24 November to 24 December 1950, when the Chinese intervened and inflicted the devastating setbacks to United Nations forces.

*Disaster in Korea* tells the story of Eighth Army during that month. Composed of the US 1st Cavalry, 2d, 24th, and 25th infantry divisions, and other United Nations forces, Eighth Army was operating in northwestern Korea. Hit unexpectedly by masses of lightly armed Chinese, Eighth Army broke and bugged out, a shameful episode in our military history. Up to now the only book on that humiliating defeat has been S. L. A. Marshall's uneven, error-prone (and curiously over-praised) *The River and the Gauntlet*. Appleman's full, authoritative *Disaster* thus fills a vital gap in the history of American arms and the Korean War. It is a candid and compelling story, chock full of lessons for battlefield commanders.

*Escaping the Trap* tells the story of the X Corps during that month. Composed of the 1st Marine Division, the Army's 3d and 7th infantry divisions, and other United Nations forces, the X Corps was operating in northeast Korea, independently of Eighth Army. As is well known, when the Chinese struck, the 1st Marine Division and some Army elements were almost trapped and annihilated at the bitterly cold Chosin Reservoir, but escaped in a valorous, cliff-hanging retrograde movement to Hungnam. Most of *Escaping* is a recapitulation of the Marines' story, but by including the less well-known roles played by the Army's 3d and 7th divisions (and other Army elements) during this crisis, Appleman provides the first full and balanced account of this most famous action in the Korean War.

*East of Chosin* tells the little-known story of the terrible disaster that befell the Army's 31st Regimental Combat Team ("Task Force MacLean") during that month. Hurriedly slapped together from disparate units of the Army's 7th division, this 3,000-man Army outfit relieved the Fifth Marines east of Chosin Reservoir so that the Marines could join the Seventh Marines at Yudam, west of the reservoir. Stranded and encircled by the Chinese, the task force held its ground heroically for five days, disrupting the Chinese attack on Hagaru, thereby materially assisting the withdrawal of the Marines from Yudam. In the process, it suffered ghastly casualties. Originally the story of this outfit was intended to be merely a chapter in *Escaping the Trap*. But after spending seven years tracking down the participants and piecing together the story, Appleman correctly decided that this tale was worthy of a separate book. *East of Chosin* is a tour de force of research and a riveting story as well. As originally intended, a condensed version (80 pages) of this grim saga is included in *Escaping the Trap*.

The final volume in the Appleman quintet, to be published in November of this year, is *Ridgway Duels for Korea*. It relates the succeeding six months of combat in Korea, January to June 1951, when Eighth Army and X Corps merged and, under the brilliant leadership of General Matthew B. Ridgway, returned to the offensive. In a series of decisive victories, they drove the Chinese Communists out of South Korea and forced them to the negotiating table.

In these four new volumes, plus the earlier *South to the Naktong*, Appleman has provided us a grand total of 2,721 published pages on the first year of combat in the Korean War. None of the five books is a literary masterpiece. Some are difficult reading at times and some are marred by repetition and poor organization of material.

Black veterans of the war have criticized Appleman's consistently harsh treatment of the white-led, black-manned 24th Infantry Regiment. But taken as a whole, the Appleman work is a stunning scholarly achievement for which all who attempt to reconstruct that important but forgotten war can be grateful.

**The Limits of Air Power: The American Bombing of North Vietnam.** By Mark Clodfelter. New York: The Free Press, 1989. 297 pages. \$22.95. Reviewed by Eliot A. Cohen, coauthor of *Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War*.

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Slowly, we are beginning to see analytical treatments of American strategy in Vietnam, books which deal in a detached fashion with the war as history. Such works have hardly been free of controversy (think of Andrew Krepinevich's book, *The Army and Vietnam*, for example), but they are different from the first rash of memoirs and instant histories. Written in some cases by authors who did not fight in Vietnam, these new studies may lack immediacy, but they have a scholarly objectivity that makes them no less valuable. Mark Clodfelter's important study of the air war over North Vietnam is a landmark in this literature, and it will repay reading by all concerned not only with the Vietnam War, but with the future of American strategy. Like his Army counterpart Krepinevich, Clodfelter is a young officer with a Ph.D. who has had the courage to study the war and reject, politely but firmly, the stab-in-the-back theory that one occasionally hears even today from serving officers. "If only the politicians had let us do the job" or "if only we had had a clear objective," we would have won the war, goes the claim. There is, of course, an element of truth in such complaints, but they are one-sided and even, in some measure, dangerous.

Clodfelter examines the three air campaigns against North Vietnam: Rolling Thunder (2 March 1965 to 31 October 1968), Linebacker I (10 May 1972 to 23 October 1972), and Linebacker II (18-29 December 1972). He describes the origins and unfolding of these campaigns, the political objectives the civilian leaders had in mind, and the way the military interpreted those objectives. He pays particular attention—and this is the most useful feature of this book—to the various controls and restraints placed on the bombing campaigns by the politicians, by the military itself, and by enemy measures. Clodfelter concludes that the higher military command consistently failed to understand that North Vietnam did not represent a suitable target for the methods and concepts of aerial bombing that were applied in World War II. Bombing of the North could not deliver the goods, in his view, even had President Johnson lifted restrictions on the application of air power earlier than he did. Furthermore, Clodfelter reminds his readers, Johnson did gradually lift many of the target restrictions set early in Rolling Thunder. And, Clodfelter believes, some of Johnson's political concerns (in particular, his fear of inducing large-scale Chinese intervention or much larger Soviet participation in the war) were perfectly legitimate.

The clamor of the military for politically unimpeded bombing was a fantasy based on their understanding of the World War II experience. To be sure, Linebacker I and II were far more effective than Rolling Thunder, in part because the military had a freer hand. But as Clodfelter observes, circumstances were entirely different: the



political objectives had changed from a North Vietnamese defeat to "peace with honor"; the Communists were trying to sustain a conventional force in the south rather than a less vulnerable guerrilla army; and new technologies were available for precision bombing.

Clodfelter does not spare the civilian leadership either. He describes the chaotic policymaking of the Johnson Administration, which made its military decisions at regular Tuesday lunches. A soldier did not attend these meetings until October 1967. The description of Robert McNamara's failing wretchedly—indeed, not even trying—to be an honest purveyor of the views of the JCS is almost as upsetting. If the leaders of the Air Force were caught up in memories (mythic memories, I would add) of how we fought World War II, the civilian leadership was in the grip of the notion that they could communicate their power of will and titrate the infliction of pain in such a way as to bring the North Vietnamese to terms.

One therefore rises from this study, as from so many others of the Vietnam War, convinced that there is more than enough blame to go around. If the civilian leadership failed miserably to work with the military, the military leadership made grotesque command errors of its own (Clodfelter is particularly scathing on SAC's management of the Linebacker II strikes, which resulted in wholly unnecessary B-52 losses). Worse, both groups ignored such reasonably dispassionate investigations as the Jason Summer Studies, which indicated that bombing simply would not have the effects promised.

There are many lessons to be learned from the Vietnam War, including those pertaining to civil-military relations in wartime. The civilian leadership need never apologize for its control of the conduct of a war. The notion that it will merely set forth its "objectives" in a few crisp sentences for the mission paragraph of an operations order is a dangerous chimera. But it must work in partnership, albeit unequal partnership, with the military, and there must be continuous and orderly—if acrimonious—dialogue throughout. As Clausewitz tells us, there is no such thing as a "military" objection to policy, only bad policy. It is a credit to officer historians such as Clodfelter that they see and explain this with rare clarity. And it is a credit to the armed forces of the United States that they do not merely give junior officers the opportunity to perform such studies but, as I hope, will pay heed to their conclusions.

**So Far From God: The U.S. War With Mexico, 1846-1848.** By John S. D. Eisenhower. New York: Random House, 1989. 436 pages. \$24.95. Reviewed by Colonel John B. B. Trussell, USA Ret., former Chief of the History Division, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

On a number of grounds, the Mexican War stands as a major event not only in American military history but also in the political and territorial development of the United States. It was the first war the United States won militarily and the last war the United States won without massive material superiority. It was our first overseas war. It brought territorial expansion matched only by the Louisiana Purchase. At the same time, it was marked by the highest proportional loss of life the Army has suffered in any war it has ever fought; it gave rise to a Mexican animosity that persists to this day; and it hardened the evolving lines of sectional division within the United States itself.

Notwithstanding these claims to attention, the Mexican War has been largely ignored. Such treatment as it has received has tended to be undeservedly limited or inexcusably partisan. The military events too often have been seen merely as early training experiences for Civil War generals. In terms of politics, it has been presented, domestically, as a conspiracy to extend slavery and, internationally, either as an example of the North American bully victimizing a weaker neighbor or of bellicose Mexican intransigence.

If *So Far From God* merely added to awareness of the Mexican War and its importance, John Eisenhower would have provided a worthwhile service. As it is, in producing a balanced and lucid account of highly complex events, he has made an extremely valuable contribution to American historical literature.

Among its many virtues, the book brings out the logistical and command problems stemming from the slow communications and transportation, markedly more primitive than what would be available just a few years later in the Civil War; it clearly describes the events and interrelationships in what amounted to no less than four distinct theaters of operation; it offers realistic descriptions of the confusion of the battles while doing full justice to the impressive tactical achievements of the greatly and invariably outnumbered American Army; and it provides a revealing case study of the conflicting priorities of a President blind to all but partisan political considerations and an individualistic, egotistical commanding general whom the President perceived, with good reason, as a potential rival for office.

It is testimony to John Eisenhower's objectivity that he succeeds in being fair to both President James Polk and General Winfield Scott, and to Mexican General Santa Anna as well. In addition to the fact that he writes exceptionally well, he has given a clear picture of the context of political factors and personality conflicts in both nations without detriment to his principal focus, which is, properly, on the military events. These are presented accurately and with the realistic understanding of the significance of detail to be expected from a professionally educated, experienced, and articulate soldier—an understanding too often lacking in "military" histories written by purely academic historians. As an additional bonus, especially appreciated by military readers, the maps are comprehensive in coverage and first-rate in quality. All told, this book is not only an insightful account of an important episode that has been unjustifiably disregarded but also a model of what a military history ought to be.

**Soviet Military Doctrine: Continuity, Formulation, and Dissemination.** By Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1988. 315 pp. \$45.00. Reviewed by Natalie A. Gross, Professor of Political-Military Studies, US Army Russian Institute.

Harriet Fast and William F. Scott have recently added another book to their prolific collection of writings on Soviet defense policy. The new study is devoted to the evolution of Soviet military doctrine, a topical and hotly debated subject creating a good deal of controversy and confusion among Western observers. In well-organized and succinctly presented chapters, the Scotts clarify to the nonspecialist Western reader what the Soviet military establishment means by the term "doctrine" and how Soviet understanding of doctrinal change differs from that common in Western armies and defense establishments.

In a formal hierarchy of Soviet military concepts, military doctrine represents a consensus view of future war, and of peace and wartime defense planning, all as adopted by the national leadership and supported by the High Command. From a Soviet perspective, military doctrine incorporates socio-political as well as military-technical aspects of forecasting and planning for the next war—from broad strategic assessments of the international environment and the probability and type of future conflict to more narrow operational dilemmas associated with force development, hardware, and the conduct of military operations.

The Scotts have analyzed Soviet military doctrine in a historical context, tracing its origins to Mikhail Frunze's notion of "unified doctrine" and outlining its evolution from the concept of deep operations in the 1930s to nuclear and conventional modernization during the arms control era. The authors' encyclopedic knowledge and meticulous examination of open-source Soviet military literature, including such gems as military conference proceedings published in limited-circulation editions or articles by prominent commanders printed in second-tier civilian journals, are highly commendable and quite exceptional among Western analyses of the Soviet military. A historical survey of Soviet sources has proven valuable for documenting the fact that until the early 1980s the Soviet military leadership had defined their military doctrine as unequivocally offensive. Soviet spokesmen now dispute this point, arguing that throughout Soviet history the *political* component of the Soviet army's doctrine has remained strictly defensive, whereas its military-technical aspect (i.e. operational concepts, force structure, and weapon acquisition programs) has been configured for conduct of large-scale offensive operations.

Regrettably, one finds little new information in the second part of the book, which discusses Soviet methodology for strategic and operational planning and the role of political and military institutions in formulating and disseminating military doctrine. The authors have previously treated these issues in *The Armed Forces of the USSR*, a standard reference work on Soviet military affairs.

But while the new book on doctrine is informative for a general military professional, a Soviet expert will find the study's descriptive rather than analytical focus somewhat disappointing. For all its superb documentation, the study has not explored at any depth the interrelationship among the variables that make up Soviet military doctrine. Rather, the Scotts have accepted at face value the Soviet assertion that the doctrine's political dimension has been immune to change and that it continues to shape the nature of Soviet military doctrine, regardless of the revolutionary changes in the military-technical aspect of modern warfare. In reality, however, during the past few years the political side of Soviet doctrine, especially its assessment of the probability of war, has undergone important change. First, the Soviet leadership has revised and refined its view of the international environment, concluding that a global war—either conventional or nuclear—between competing socio-political systems is unlikely and that conflict between them can be managed and reduced through political instruments. Second, the leadership has reexamined its use of military force in the Third World, moving away from high-cost direct military intervention to a more sophisticated mix of political-military options toward the lower end of the spectrum of conflict.

The Scotts have aptly reminded us of the basic continuity in Soviet threat assessment—the threat lying in the opposing Western socio-political system—yet they have largely failed to appreciate the scope of change in Soviet military doctrine

as a whole. It is difficult, for instance, to dismiss as propaganda the Soviet revision of the military-technical aspect of doctrine—a renewed emphasis on defensive operations during the initial period of war. An important impetus for this greater reliance on defense apparently has come from Western development of highly sophisticated and lethal conventional weapons, but this does not reduce the significance of changes currently sweeping the entire Soviet military system.

The question, of course, is how to assess the scope of these changes—do they mean a far-reaching revamping of doctrine, or a minor modification of Soviet war plans? Yet, in the dialectical Soviet view of doctrine, military and political aspects of a future war are interrelated. This would suggest that changes in weapon technologies, force structure, strategic approaches, and operational concepts would correlate with political assessments of threat and the probability of war. The Scotts' book does not explain these correlations in any systematic or rigorous fashion, but it does an important job of compiling a history of Soviet views on military doctrine from Mikhail Frunze and V. I. Lenin to Marshal Akhromeev and Mikhail Gorbachev. The study can be recommended as a textbook for Soviet-track courses at US military academies and war colleges. I would suggest, however, that this primary text be supplemented with selected recent papers and articles reflecting diverging Western interpretations of Soviet military doctrine during the 1980s.

**Battle Tactics of the Civil War.** By Paddy Griffith. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1989. 239 pages. \$25.00. Reviewed by Colonel John W. Mountcastle, whose Ph.D. dissertation was titled "Trial by Fire: U.S. Incendiary Weapons, 1918-1945."

Add this excellent study to your professional library if you want a better understanding of the nature of combat on the Civil War battlefield. Paddy Griffith, a senior lecturer in War Studies at Sandhurst, has drawn on his extensive knowledge of warfare in the 19th century and has completed a review of a host of published and primary sources to produce a book with an arresting thesis. Mr. Griffith concludes that the American Civil War, rather than being the first truly modern war fought with machine weapons and thus a precursor of the slugfest waged by the deeply entrenched armies of World War I, was instead very much a series of bloody combats fought by enthusiastic, if not especially talented, amateur armies that sought to win each battle and wage each campaign in the Napoleonic style.

Griffith argues convincingly that during the 1860s, North American military men were not prepared to exploit the increased range and accuracy of the rifled musket, that they continued to employ artillery as it had been employed 50 years before, and that cavalry played a minor role because Americans were simply not trained in the use of cavalry as a producer of shock effect. The author supports this thesis by analyzing the conduct of actions in the widely dispersed campaigns conducted in the Eastern and Western theaters.

The book is organized in a most felicitous fashion. Griffith discusses the "Alleged Origins of Modern Battle" by way of introduction; then, in a series of short but tightly focused chapters, lays out his thesis by discussing Civil War command and control techniques, drill, fortifications, the rifled musket, artillery, and cavalry. His chapter titled "The Infantry Firefight" is especially well done. He paints an accurate

picture of infantry combat as executed by the two American armies of the day. The fact that both sides were not fully armed with rifled muskets until the latter half of the war is illuminating when one tries to understand the continued use of short-range engagements. Griffith carries the reader rapidly along to his conclusion—that our great bloodletting was the last of the Napoleonic Wars.

In each of these chapters, the author goes to great lengths to provide an evenhanded analysis of the conventional wisdom concerning the Civil War. He does not believe that an enlightened understanding of the murderous effects of period weapons by American soldiers resulted in a universal shift toward defensive combat, even though troops in both armies grew much less eager to attack as the war went on. Griffith's conclusion is that Northern and Southern leaders truly did *not* modify their tactics, despite the increased lethality of the weapons in the hands of troops. To the contrary, Griffith insists that even though they recognized their weapons' effects, Civil War soldiers continued to fight as they thought professional (European) soldiers fought—in mass, at close range, and with limited tactical objectives. It is hard to dispute his findings, which after all are generally shared by those who see the more professionally trained armies of the Franco-Prussian War as the progenitors of the modern weaponry and sophisticated staff procedures employed by the European armies and imitated by all other military establishments during the Great War.

For the student of Civil War combat, the superbly annotated bibliography and informative notes would be worth the price of this slim volume, even if taken by themselves. The book is easy to use as a resource document for those who would like to wrestle with the "last of the old or first of the new wars" questions frequently raised about the Civil War. But *Battle Tactics* is more than a resource document. It is an excellent study of men in war. For those who may have asked themselves in the middle of a terrain walk of Antietam, or a staff ride at Gettysburg, "What was it like for the men who fought here?" this book is a must. Griffith's style is as agreeable as his organizational skill, so the book is a darn good read.

**Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency: U.S.-Soviet Policy in the Third World.** Edited by Richard H. Shultz, Jr., Uri Ra'anan, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., William J. Olson, and Igor Lukas. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1989. 434 pages. \$55.00. Reviewed by Major Daniel P. Bolger, author of *Americans at War 1975-1986: An Era of Violent Peace*.

Guerrilla warfare seems to be all the rage these days. Every self-proclaimed defense expert worth his Rolodex has something to say about the matter. The subject attracts policy analysts like moths to flame or, to be more precise, like consultants to contract dollars.

Whether or not it was in vogue with the beltway banditry, low-intensity conflict (LIC) has always been there. Shadow conflicts smolder today in many key corners of the world. Like any little fire, a mishandled small war can grow into a real conflagration, as America discovered at great cost in Southeast Asia. The US Army recognizes the continuing danger. Current Army doctrine defines four likely LIC missions: peacekeeping, contingencies, counterterrorism, and insurgency/counter-insurgency.

That last one is the real joker in the deck, and it has resisted a raft of post-1945 American solutions, whether inflicted by Robert McNamara's whiz kids or concocted by the present breed of self-assured LIC advisers. In truth, Americans just don't seem to understand this guerrilla stuff, even though we practiced it in the 18th century and defeated it in the 19th and early 20th. Even the Soviets, who claim insurgencies as their immediate heritage, cannot really handle guerrillas as well as they profess. So argue the bulk of the 28 eminent contributors to *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency*, a new compendium that addresses this most troubling aspect of low-intensity conflict.

*Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency* sprang from a 1987 conference at Tufts University, organized and sponsored by the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, the US Army War College, and the National Defense University. The resultant series of interesting papers, collected and edited for this volume, reflects a wide panoply of thinking on the general topic of insurgencies. The pieces are loosely grouped under five headings: US and Soviet objectives in the Third World, doctrinal and strategic issues, military capabilities, political and psychological operations, and a concluding selection of seven enlightening case studies.

The authors reflect a mixture of perspectives from the academic, diplomatic, intelligence, and military communities. Most have held critical policy-formulation positions in America. The galaxy of assembled talent includes Jeane Kirkpatrick, Lieutenant General William P. Yarborough (USA Ret.), Noel C. Koch, General John R. Galvin, David Isby, Colonel Rod Paschall, Graham H. Turbiville, General Richard G. Stilwell (USA Ret.), Dr. William J. Olson, and former Soviet intelligence officer Ilya Dzhirkvelov. In short, there aren't any fast-buck know-it-alls here. These people understand their difficult subject, often thanks to personal experience.

As a result, they offer many perceptive findings in both US and Soviet theory and practice in the murky realm of guerrilla and counter guerrilla operations. They avoid pat answers or pretentious prescriptions, a definite indication of the quality of their efforts. Insurgencies don't lend themselves to simple solutions, and all 28 writers accept the tricky nature of their subject matter without simply restating the obvious.

Three general threads run through the book. First, the insurgency challenge looms as a fundamental threat to US interests well beyond the turn of the century, regardless of the state of the superpower dialogue. Guerrilla fighting has become an entrenched growth industry in the troubled Third World. Whether Americans like it or not, protracted warfare will not go away.

Second, both the Soviets and Americans involve themselves in guerrilla and anti-guerrilla undertakings, and their varying degrees of success relate both to local situations and the asymmetrical character of each superpower's capabilities and constraints. Participants generally believe that the Soviets maintain an edge, which they judge to range from slight to substantial, depending upon the author.

Third, and most important, the contributors argue convincingly that American insurgent warfare operations have been hamstrung by an inability or unwillingness to develop coherent, coordinated policy. Some of the key pieces are present and ready (intelligence services, special warfare units, information organs, foreign aid programs, diplomats, and executives); some are missing (especially a corps of trained political-military strategists); and some are confused or vastly overburdened (human intelligence collection programs, for example). One gets the impression from these

authors that the whole US guerrilla warfare policy engine is tied together by baling wire, chewing gum, and good intentions, utterly dependent upon the fortuitous coincidence of the right leaders in the key slots. In the grim, unforgiving world of low-intensity conflict, that often is not enough.

In sum, *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency* would interest most professional soldiers, particularly those in special operations, intelligence, and contingency forces. Given the steep price, the book looks like a better addition to organizational libraries than to personal collections.

**Victims and Survivors: Displaced Persons and Other War Victims in Viet-Nam, 1954-1975.** By Louis A. Wiesner. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1988. 448 pages. \$55.00. Reviewed by Dr. Richard A. Hunt, currently writing the official history of the pacification program in Vietnam for the US Army Center of Military History.

Louis Wiesner, in the conclusion of his comprehensive account of the refugee problem, calculates that between 1954 and 1975 "well over half the people of South Vietnam [over 11 million] were uprooted, some more than once." Despite the startling human cost of the war, study of the refugees' plight has been relatively neglected by Vietnam specialists. Most writers have focused on the fighting but not its impact on South Vietnam's civilian population, whose hearts and minds were ostensibly at issue. Wiesner's thoroughly researched account, the work of a former administrator of refugee relief programs in Vietnam, highlights this neglected area.

Refugee programs carried out by Vietnamese ministries with the help of American funds and advisers ameliorated but did not overcome the debilitating effects of dislocation. The large numbers of people moving from their homes into refugee camps or the cities imposed upon South Vietnamese and American officials a heavy social and economic burden, for which they were ill-prepared. Corruption and inefficiency in administering programs were additional handicaps. Moreover, allied military strategy continually exacerbated the situation.

The conflict between a military strategy that sanctioned the forcible relocation of people in order to mount operations and a MACV policy that restricted such movements to a bare minimum is the book's dominant theme. Wiesner persuasively demonstrates how the work of caring for refugees was easily undone by military operations that created new homeless persons and destroyed livelihoods. Such operations, which were apparently never completely curtailed, undermined the credibility of government efforts to help the people and win their loyalty. In his view, the implications of this strategy were tragic, because the fighting continually diminished the arable land available for resettlement.

Wiesner concludes that the existence of large numbers of poorly treated war victims produced widespread demoralization among the populace, contributing to South Vietnam's defeat. "What counted was that the great majority [of war victims] did not support or help the government, and in the face of united and fanatical Communist forces and cadres, that lack of support from so large a part of the population meant that the GVN was bound to lose." This conclusion begs the question of what difference greater political support would have made in staving off military

defeat. A loyal population was not enough. At the end, South Vietnam needed well-led armed forces more than anything else.

Wiesner's book contains a number of flaws. He often fails to provide in sufficient detail the military context of the operations he criticizes, neglecting to make clear why specific military plans were chosen and whether the military had feasible alternatives. He presents some issues and events whose significance is unclear. For instance, Wiesner spends several pages discussing a refugee survey that was not even received by American officials in Vietnam. The author also could have compressed the detailed descriptions of programs and paraphrased long quotations without weakening the force of his conclusion.

Is Wiesner stating the obvious, that war generates refugees? I think not. His work illuminates one of the tragic ironies of Vietnam. A significant part of the suffering was inflicted on the South Vietnamese not by their adversaries but by their allies. He raises important human issues largely neglected in the debates over policy and strategy. The book thus breaks new ground in the literature on the Vietnam War.

**The Recourse to War: An Appraisal of the "Weinberger Doctrine."**

Edited by Alan Ned Sabrosky and Robert L. Sloane. Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1989. 159 pages. Reviewed by Colonel Asa A. Clark and Captain A. Dwight Raymond, Department of Social Sciences, US Military Academy.

What will be the legacy of the Reagan foreign policy? Arguably, the high point of Reagan's foreign policy was the revitalization of domestic confidence in and international respect for US global leadership and influence. Whatever else emerges in the Reagan legacy, President Reagan succeeded in reinvigorating America with a sense of vitality and purpose after a series of soul-searching domestic political self-trials (in connection with Vietnam, Watergate, the role of the CIA, the oil crisis, and the Iranian hostage crisis).

A key catalyst in Reagan's success lay in his determination to reestablish a potent US defense posture. Accordingly, the Reagan Administration spent close to \$2 trillion on defense, and resorted frequently to the show and use of force in flash-point situations (in, for example, Korea, the Persian Gulf, Grenada, Libya, and Beirut). Given this context of security threats and defense buildup, the Reagan Administration grappled with the tough questions of how and when force should be used.

These are intrinsically difficult questions, especially for the United States. Confronted by threats ranging from terrorism to nuclear blackmail, the United States must wrestle with the dilemma of being the world's unique *pluralistic superpower*. No other country faces the task of trying to reconcile this unique combination of internal and external challenges. As a superpower, the United States has strategic interests and wields influence around the world. As a pluralistic polity, the United States must contend with a myriad of diverse and countervailing domestic political forces in attempting to forge coherent and effective foreign policy to meet these international challenges. The fact that Reagan resolved to make a strong defense posture the keystone of his administration compounded the difficulty of deciding how to show and use force.

These difficult questions triggered the Weinberger-Shultz debate over the role of force in US foreign policy. In November 1984, as part of this debate, Secretary



of Defense Caspar Weinberger articulated six criteria to guide US decisions on whether to use force:

- The commission of forces to combat must support a vital interest of the United States or its allies.
- Sufficient troops should be committed to win.
- Political and military objectives should be clearly defined.
- The ends-means relationship (objectives and force) should be continually reassessed.
- Reasonable assurance of public support should be obtained.
- Force should be used only as a last resort.

These criteria, embodied in the so-called Weinberger Doctrine, will long stand as a landmark of the Reagan foreign policy legacy. They can be viewed in a number of ways: as a final checklist before troops are committed to combat, as a doctrinal template for guiding broad policy, or as a strawman for stimulating debate and thoughtful reflection on the fundamental role of force in US policy. What are we to make of these criteria? In which of these roles are they helpful to us?

*The Recourse to War: An Appraisal of the "Weinberger Doctrine,"* edited by Alan Ned Sabrosky and Robert L. Sloane, is an important volume that begins to flesh out answers to these questions. Unsurprisingly, contributors to *Recourse* are divided in their evaluations of the Weinberger Doctrine. David Twining and James Turner Johnson are laudatory, while William Eckhardt, Samuel Newland, and Douglas Johnson II are critical. Charles Marthinsen and Alan Ned Sabrosky remain evenhanded in their judgments. Taken as a set, the component parts of *Recourse* provide a rich array of viewpoints for assessing the issues spotlighted by the Weinberger criteria.

David Twining parrots the Reagan line in praising the Weinberger Doctrine as "an adaptive, pragmatic approach to policymaking." A significant contribution of the doctrine, he argues, is its clear-sighted acknowledgment of the domestic political debate that surrounds decisions to use force. Mistakenly, Twining suggests that the Weinberger-Shultz debate was much ado about nothing: he argues that the two secretaries were fundamentally in agreement. However, this contention ignores the often caustic public debate between these two cabinet officials over whether US policy should aim to avoid "more Vietnams" or "more Munichs."

In one of the most interesting contributions to *Recourse*, James Turner Johnson attempts to underpin the Weinberger Doctrine with a moral basis by presenting the criteria as a contemporary application of just war theory. Although Johnson provides an excellent overview of the evolution of just war tradition, he fails to link the criteria convincingly to just war precepts. Is it conceivable that an intervention could satisfy Weinberger's conditions, yet violate just war theory? Cases such as the Spanish-American War and the US naval presence in the Persian Gulf (which implicitly favored Iraq, the aggressor) suggest that the answer is yes. Johnson's main inductive flaw is equating Weinberger's "national interest" with "just cause"—this reasoning is fallacious and historically dangerous. In addition, Johnson claims that Weinberger's third stipulation about clearly defined objectives subsumes the concept of "right intention" (that force must be used for a just cause, not for some ulterior motive). The concepts are simply not the same. Normative analysts are often accused of confusing "what ought to be" with "what is." Perhaps Weinberger should have considered just war theory when formulating his criteria; however, there is no evidence that he did.

Eckhardt delivers a mild internationalist critique of the Weinberger Doctrine by pointing out that the criteria slight the role of international law and international institutions. In this sense, the Weinberger Doctrine reflects a virulently nationalist approach to foreign policy—one that is out of step, arguably, with the realities of an increasingly interdependent world. Eckhardt's challenge can be carried further. After developing a strong case for international institutions and international law, he notes that the Weinberger Doctrine has nothing to say about international law or institutions such as the United Nations. This should be adequate grounds for an internationalist to vilify the doctrine. However, like Johnson, Eckhardt reads too much into the Weinberger criteria; he suggests that Weinberger was doing his best to grapple with several considerations, to include "using our ancient just war tradition to seek consensus on unilateral *jus ad bellum*." Eckhardt even claims that Weinberger was really speaking "to the citizens of the world about the proper use of force" and was leaving ample room for the injection of legalist considerations.

While developing an excellent general framework, Eckhardt's contribution falls short by not challenging the Weinberger criteria more vigorously. From Eckhardt's internationalist perspective, the Weinberger Doctrine dissolves, all too easily, into the simple maxim: "Use force when you can get away with it." No matter how prudently applied, the Weinberger Doctrine fundamentally contradicts the principles of international law and the United Nations.

Critics from both the right and left often disagree with depictions of the Weinberger Doctrine as being "pragmatic," "just," or "politically expedient." With respect to force procurement and broad strategy for its use, however, critics from both halves of the spectrum agree that the doctrine translates into a policy to "buy everything and use nothing." But interventionists prefer a "buy everything and use it often" approach, while neo-isolationists advocate a "buy little and be peaceful" approach.

Just as this issue is the truly interesting aspect of the debate generated by the Weinberger Doctrine, it provides the strongest grounds for indicting *Recourse*: only the Newland-Johnson chapter adequately addresses the implications of this question. Not coincidentally, it is the best chapter in the book in that it delivers the strongest critique of the criteria by insightfully revealing the many tensions among Weinberger's six tests. For example, the Weinberger criteria justify the use of military force to secure an ally's interests, though it is self-evident that disagreement is the norm among US allies (and, for that matter, within the United States). More significantly, a strict adherence to the precepts of "public support" and "last resort" constrains the flexibility that is the sine qua non for a successful foreign policy. By developing these and other considerations, Newland and Johnson show that although useful in theory, the Weinberger criteria are inadequate as a policymaking template.

The Marthinsen and Sabrosky chapters are evenhanded in their assessments of the value of the Weinberger Doctrine. Pointing out that the tensions reflected in the Weinberger-Shultz debate have recurred throughout US history, Marthinsen argues that these issues are an American tradition. Like Twining, he regards Weinberger's criterion emphasizing the role of public support as important. What's new? Rather than underlining this well-known point, it would be more useful if Marthinsen were to apply the Weinberger criteria to the many cases in which the United States has used force. Such a rigorous historical analysis could fruitfully illuminate the soundness of US policy in these cases, or could suggest conclusions about the analytical robustness of the six tests.

In synthesizing the authors' assessments, Sabrosky concludes that, appropriately, the key variables bearing on the US use of force are the American political process and American public opinion. The presence of these factors is cause for comfort. To condemn the American political system and public opinion as "flaws" because they act to fetter and constrain decisions to use force is to ignore the fact that these forces are fundamental cornerstones of our philosophy of government, reflecting root issues of accountability and pluralism.

At first glance, the Weinberger Doctrine appears to simplify decisionmaking about the use of military force. However, the readings in *Recourse* reveal the truth that such decisions remain as problematic as ever. Because the Weinberger criteria are too simple to achieve sufficiently high resolution, they illustrate the limits of such templates for informing general policy or for guiding specific decisions to use force. We should note, though, that the Weinberger criteria usefully provoke and elevate thoughtful debate concerning the role of force in US foreign policy.

Two key principles, reflecting the fact that the United States is a pluralistic superpower (a condition fraught with tensions), are illuminated by such debate. First, American pluralism complicates the problem of mobilizing and sustaining domestic political support for the use of force. In crises, as a rule, Americans rally behind the use of force. However, this support has a short half-life: its continuation depends on the influence of factors such as perceptions of the stakes, degree of success, expectations of the duration of the intervention, and perceived net benefits. The second key principle is the importance of understanding the international context which conditions the use of force. The danger here lies in resorting to force for reasons apart from the specific situation. In general, the key to the "successful" use of force (particularly in Third World conflicts) lies more in unique, local idiosyncrasies than in the stability of the regional balance of power or global perceptions of US resolve.

The primary value of *Recourse*, then, lies in sensitizing practitioners and students of US security policy to the fundamental significance of these internal and external political factors for the successful use of force. Cultivating this sensitivity is a large challenge—it does not come naturally. The Weinberger Doctrine does not overcome these difficulties. However, the criteria it sets forth, and analyses such as those contained in *The Recourse to War*, stimulate thoughtful debate throughout the national security community. Such debate and thoughtful analysis are both consistent with American pluralism and constructive for the quality of future US foreign policy.

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## *From the Archives*

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### Eisenhower's Reflections on An Army War College Education

On 31 August 1966, less than three years before his death, General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, accompanied by his wife Mamie, visited the US Army War College. The occasion was a combined dedication ceremony for the Eisenhower Ballroom of the Carlisle Barracks Open Mess and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Chair of Strategic Appraisal. At the ceremony, General Eisenhower made the following remarks:

The War College marks a great change in the formal education of officers of our armed services. That formal education up until the time of the War College has been concerned with the techniques, the tactics, the logistics of battle and campaigns, the preparation and operation of troops. Now you are thinking about war and about victory in war, or, better, about keeping us out of war. The strength of a nation can never be measured merely in guns, planes, tanks, and ships. The real influence of a nation in the world is measured by the product of its spiritual, its economic, and its military strength. And so, realizing that war involves every single facet of human existence and thinking, here at the College education deserts the formerly rather narrow business of winning a tactical victory on the battlefield; it is now concerned with the nation's strength more broadly construed.

I wish sometimes I could go back to my own year at the War College. It was the one year that was set aside completely for the study of our profession, a profession we entered as lieutenants many, many years earlier. I think that each of you pondering all of these aspects of national strength—the factors of morale, of spiritual strength and productivity, and of the size and efficiency of our military—cannot fail at times to look at the present difficulty we have in Southeast Asia. We sometimes think, I believe with some dismay, that one of these factors, the spiritual factor, so far as we're concerned here at home is not up to what we should like. Whether it is because of honest differences of opinion, or whether it is pure ignorance, we do not seem to show that unity, that terrific dedication to the nation's interests, which would demand, once we are committed to the use of force, that we must win. This nation can afford no less.

And I would hope that everybody so thinking forgets not his duty as a citizen to help inform others. I am not so sure that Stephen Decatur was completely correct when he said, "Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong." But within the umbrella of our own faith in our own God, I know of no other concept which should command our loyalty and dedication. Thus, so far as I'm concerned, wrong or right, it's my country, and I believe that if more of us can help people to forget their carping criticisms, help them to understand what we mean when we say we're going to defend freedom and human dignity and human liberty—that if we can do that, we will also be showing the effects of an education at the Army War College.

Source: *US Army War College Commentary* (February 1967), pp. 1-3. The text is slightly edited and abridged.